

Give Us  
**This Day**<sup>®</sup>  
DAILY PRAYER FOR TODAY'S CATHOLIC

MARCH 2020



## Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus)

Luke 1:68-79

**B**lessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;  
he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior,  
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old  
that he would save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers  
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,  
free to worship him without fear,  
holy and righteous in his sight  
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet  
of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,  
to give his people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
to shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.

Give Us This Day<sup>®</sup>



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
<p><b>1 First Week of Lent</b> v</p> <p>↘ Kimberly Hope Belcher</p> <p><i>Within the Word: Our Deepest Desires</i> ↘ Sr. Joan Cook</p>	<p><b>2</b> v</p> <p>✠ St. David of Wales ↘ Sr. Ruth Burrows</p>	<p><b>3</b> v</p> <p><i>[St. Katharine Drexel]</i></p> <p>✠ St. Teresa Verzeri ↘ Fr. Daniel Horan</p>
<p><b>8 Second Week of Lent</b> v</p> <p>↘ Pope Francis</p> <p><i>Within the Word: "Everything I Have Is Yours"</i> ↘ Sr. Barbara Reid</p>	<p><b>9</b> v</p> <p><i>[St. Frances of Rome]</i></p> <p>✠ St. Catherine of Bologna ↘ Mark Strobel</p>	<p><b>10</b> v</p> <p>✠ Harriet Tubman ↘ St. Paschasius Radbertus</p>
<p><b>15 Third Week of Lent</b> v</p> <p>↘ Megan McKenna</p> <p><i>Within the Word: The Art of Broken Things</i> ↘ Alice Camille</p>	<p><b>16</b> v</p> <p>✠ St. Louise de Marillac ↘ Fr. Kevin O'Brien</p>	<p><b>17</b> v</p> <p><i>[St. Patrick]</i></p> <p>✠ Franziska Jägerstätter ↘ St. Augustine</p>
<p><b>22 Fourth Week of Lent</b> v</p> <p>↘ Richard Gaillardetz</p> <p><i>Within the Word: Seeing and Believing</i> ↘ Mary Elizabeth Sperry</p>	<p><b>23</b> v</p> <p><i>[St. Turibius of Mogrovejo]</i></p> <p>✠ St. Rebecca Ar-Rayès ↘ Kathy McGovern</p>	<p><b>24</b> v</p> <p>✠ St. Oscar Romero ↘ Sr. Joan Chittister</p>
<p><b>29 Fifth Week of Lent</b> v</p> <p>↘ Rachelle Linner</p> <p><i>Within the Word: A Story for Anyone and Everyone</i> ↘ Fr. Michael Patella</p>	<p><b>30</b> v</p> <p>✠ St. John Climacus ↘ Tertullian</p>	<p><b>31</b> v</p> <p>✠ St. Maria Skobtsova ↘ Sr. Melannie Svoboda</p>

### Key

✠ *Blessed Among Us* by Robert Ellsberg

↘ *Reflection/Within the Word* Author

[ ] *Optional Memorial*

Vestment colors:

V Violet W White

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>4 v</p> <p><i>[St. Casimir]</i></p> <p>✦ Bd. Concepción Cabrera de Armida ✦ Thomas Merton</p>	<p>5 v</p> <p>✦ St. Gerasimus ✦ Nancy Dallavalle</p>	<p>6 v</p> <p>✦ Jean-Pierre de Caussade ✦ Fr. John Meoska</p>	<p>7 v</p> <p><i>[Sts. Perpetua and Felicity]</i></p> <p>✦ Sts. Perpetua and Felicity ✦ Clarence Jordan</p>
<p>11 v</p> <p>✦ St. Teresa Margaret Redi ✦ Sr. Julia Upton</p>	<p>12 v</p> <p>✦ St. Symeon the New Theologian ✦ Jay Cormier</p>	<p>13 v</p> <p>✦ Bd. Agnellus of Pisa ✦ Valerie Schultz</p>	<p>14 v</p> <p>✦ St. Maximilian ✦ St. Catherine of Siena</p>
<p>18 v</p> <p><i>[St. Cyril of Jerusalem]</i></p> <p>✦ St. Cyril of Jerusalem ✦ Fran Rossi Szpylczyn</p>	<p>19 w</p> <p><b>St. Joseph</b></p> <p>✦ Antonio de Andrade ✦ Edward Hahnenberg</p>	<p>20 v</p> <p>✦ Mother Catherine Spalding ✦ Sr. Ephrem Hollermann</p>	<p>21 v</p> <p>✦ St. Nicholas Flue ✦ Sr. Macrina Wiederkehr</p>
<p>25 w</p> <p><b>Annunciation of the Lord</b></p> <p>✦ Johan van Hulst ✦ J. Peter Nixon</p>	<p>26 v</p> <p>✦ Walter Hilton ✦ Judith Valente</p>	<p>27 v</p> <p>✦ Mothers of the Disappeared ✦ St. Hildegard of Bingen</p>	<p>28 v</p> <p>✦ Maria von Trapp ✦ Fr. Paddy Gilger</p>

March 2020

# Give Us **ThisDay**<sup>®</sup>

DAILY PRAYER FOR TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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## CONTENTS

March 2020 ♦ Volume 10, Issue 3

<i>Temptation in Everyday Clothing</i> Fr. Michael Casey .....	5
<i>Teach Us to Pray: Almsgiving as Prayer</i> Fr. James Martin .....	7
<i>The Angelus</i> Mary Stommes .....	8
Prayers and Blessings .....	10
Prayer at Night .....	14
Daily Prayer .....	17
Order of Mass .....	334
Liturgy of the Word (with Holy Communion) .....	366
Guide to <i>Lectio Divina</i> .....	369
Hymns .....	370
<i>About the Cover</i> Br. Ælred Senna .....	379

## *Temptation in Everyday Clothing*

Fr. Michael Casey

Each year, the First Sunday of Lent presents us with the image of Christ tempted in the desert. Mark, the earliest Gospel, does not detail the temptations but says simply that Jesus “was in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him” (Mark 1:13). There is no mention of fasting. What the evangelist seems to be intimating is that the Spirit brought Jesus into a different space, where he experienced something of the inner division common to us all—on the one hand, the ravaging beasts of instinctual desires, on the other, the subtle nurturing of the angels, calling him to a spiritual existence.

The forty days of temptation are an image of the whole of Jesus’ life. Like us in all things except sin, he was faced with the recurring challenge of moral choice.

We tend to think temptation is a dramatic event. As did Matthew and Luke. In scenes beloved by illustrators, they followed a source that presented Jesus engaged in verbal jousting with the devil. Likewise, in portraying the temptations of the desert hermit St. Antony of Egypt, artists filled their canvases with lurid figures attempting to seduce the saint from the way of virtue.

Perhaps dramatic temptation is easier to rebuff—precisely because it is dramatic and, therefore, visible. If we recall the insight of Hannah Arendt who spoke about “the banality of evil,” we will probably appreciate that the major work of temptation happens in everyday clothing. It is

almost invisible. It is so much part of daily life that we have ceased to pay much attention to it.

Just as Christ was driven out into the desert, we need times of withdrawal in order to become mindful of the dynamics operative throughout our lives. This means taking a step back from the distracting activities that prevent our consciences from looking too closely at the way we are living. Doing this will certainly expose us to the blessing of temptation. Instead of blindly following the prompting of our instincts we will be challenged to make a choice. When we fast, what we eat is a matter of deliberate decision, not an automatic search for gratification. Food never seems so attractive as when we turn our backs on it. So our addictions seem more powerful if they are resisted: the siren call of the internet becomes louder when we turn off our devices. We go into the desert in order to find freedom, but we do so under threat.

St. Bernard once wrote that doing penance is more a matter of endurance than of extra activity; it is learning to put up with inevitable hardships. To live more mindfully and peaceably we might try fasting from reactivity— from always having our choices dictated by the actions of others. Learning to follow our chosen path, calmly considering our options, rather than being triggered by the idiocy around us.

Coming to grips with who we are and how we act is the task and the grace of Lent. We will be even more blessed if the process becomes yearlong.

*Michael Casey, a Cistercian monk of Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia, is a well-known retreat master and lecturer, and the author of many books on spirituality, including The Road to Eternal Life and Balaam's Donkey.*



# *Teach Us to Pray*

## *Almsgiving as Prayer*

**Fr. James Martin**

The three spiritual pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. While most Christians focus on the first two, they are sometimes unfamiliar with, or neglect, the last one.

This would be surprising to early Christians, because the most common Lenten practice—fasting—was originally connected to almsgiving. One fasted not only as a physical discipline and a way to identify with the poor, but to save money (on more expensive foods like meat) and donate the savings to the poor.

While giving alms may not be the primary Lenten spiritual practice today, most people participate in some form of almsgiving—giving money to one’s parish, to a charitable organization, or to poor people we meet every day.

But can almsgiving be a form of prayer? I think it can. The next time you drop money into the collection basket in your parish, write a check to your favorite charity, or give money to a homeless person, you can start with a prayer, asking God to help you find joy in your action, knowing this is what God desires. For each act of charity helps to move our world closer to the reign of God, that “already but not yet” reality that Jesus came to inaugurate.

Afterward, you could reflect in prayer on what it meant to give alms. Did you feel a sense of “rightness”? Did you do it with an open heart or grudgingly? Did you speak to the homeless person as a friend or simply hand him or her a dollar and walk away? Overall, can you let the third pillar of Lent nourish the first pillar of Lent?

*James Martin is a Jesuit priest, editor at large of America magazine, and author of many books, including Jesus: A Pilgrimage, The Jesuit Guide, and In All Seasons, For All Reasons.*

## The Angelus

∇. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,

℟. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

*Hail Mary . . .*

∇. Behold the handmaid of the Lord,

℟. Be it done unto me according to your Word.

*Hail Mary . . .*

∇. And the Word was made flesh,

℟. And dwelt among us.

*Hail Mary . . .*

∇. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

℟. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

*Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into  
our hearts;*

*that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, your Son,  
was made known by the message of an angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory  
of his Resurrection.*

*Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*



This prayer begins as if it was all so quick and tidy: The angel—*angelus*—declared, and Mary conceived. (And then came Mary’s yes?!) The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

St. Luke’s Annunciation story gives us only a little more in the way of details. From our vantage point, we might imagine Mary deep in discernment, listening ever so intently for what and where God was calling her to be. But Mary already knew she was to be married to Joseph. It’s unlikely she went about her days asking God, “Is this all you have in store for me?!”

It's more likely that this day in Nazareth was like any other. Mary busy about her work, thinking about her forthcoming marriage, perhaps pausing to pray a psalm she had memorized: "My heart is ready. My heart is ready, O God." And suddenly . . . Gabriel, the *angelus*! Not what—or who—Mary was expecting. The visit would leave *her* expecting. Yes, she would marry Joseph (another angel would work on him!). But at the moment of her *fiat*, Mary was with child, conceived of the Holy Spirit. Mother of God—*this* is who God had called her to be.

Mother of the Word Incarnate. Blessed the fruit of her womb: God's promised Messiah. God's promise to save us.

*Pray for us, Mary, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

We hold these promises of Christ in our heart and soul, in our flesh and bones. *This* is the mystery of Incarnation made known to us by an angel—we have skin in this salvation story.

Careful what we pray for, careful with that language of beseeching, begging God to give us the grace to know and to live this mystery. The Incarnate Word was not universally loved, lest we forget. To be sure, he was surrounded by people who loved him dearly. But his zeal for love and truth was far too much for others. Grace, we learn from Jesus, is painful and lonely and so very costly. Are our hearts ready for the outpouring of *that* aspect of grace?

Jesus knew where he came from and where he was going. From eternity to eternity. After he became flesh born of Mary, there was only one way home. One long road to Jerusalem, where he died to show *us* the Way.

*By sharing in his Passion and Cross, may we be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.* Please, God, make it so.

----- Mary Stommes

*Mary Stommes is an oblate of Saint Benedict and editor of  
Give Us This Day.*

## **Lenten Prayer for Unity and Justice**

Creator Spirit, help us respond to your call to be members  
of one family.

Guide us to constant, peaceful concern  
for sisters and brothers throughout the world.

Make us mindful of the needs of those  
who must endure day by day the injustice of hunger  
and poverty.

Bless us all this Lenten season  
that we may live in harmony and unity with others.  
Renew our Christian commitment to the global family.

—*Prayer Without Borders*



Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,  
or watch, or weep tonight,  
and give your angels and saints  
charge over those who sleep.

Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.

Rest your weary ones.

Bless your dying ones.

Soothe your suffering ones.

Pity your afflicted ones.

Shield your joyous ones,

and all for your love's sake. Amen.

—St. Augustine

## Prayer with the Woman at the Well

We know her darkest secrets,  
yet we don't even know her name.  
How often we go by hearsay  
in deciding who gets our attention.

Help me, Lord, to see  
beyond the boundaries,  
beyond the labels,  
beyond the empty bucket,  
or lack thereof,  
to the flood of grace that awaits  
if only we stop to talk with the stranger.

—Diana Macalintal, *The Work of Your Hands*



## Breastplate of St. Patrick

Christ be near at either hand,  
Christ behind, before me stand;  
Christ with me where'er I go,  
Christ around, above, below.

Christ be in my heart and mind,  
Christ within my soul enshrined;  
Christ control my wayward heart;  
Christ abide and ne'er depart.

Christ my life and only way,  
Christ my lantern night and day;  
Christ be my unchanging friend,  
Guide and shepherd to the end.

—Traditional Irish hymn

## **Lenten Meal Blessing**

### *Before the meal*

Leader: Let us turn back to the Lord, our God,  
who is gracious and compassionate,  
long-suffering and ever constant,  
always ready to relent.  
Though our sins are like scarlet,  
they shall be white as snow.

All: Though they are red as crimson,  
they shall be made like wool.

Leader: Ever-patient God,  
meet us as we set ourselves to know you,  
and leave a blessing upon our table  
and all those dear to us.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

---

### *After the meal*

Leader: Abiding Lord,  
we thank you for this meal  
and for your faithful presence in our lives.  
As we grow more deeply open to you,  
we shall praise and magnify your name,  
for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

—Fr. Michael Kwatera, OSB, and Br. Dietrich Reinhart, OSB

## Prayer to Saint Joseph

Saint Joseph, Illustrious Descendant of David,  
Husband of the Mother of God,  
Foster-father of the Son of God,  
in a dream you received from the Almighty  
the task of taking Mary as your wife  
and Jesus as your Son, conceived from the Holy Spirit,  
and of caring for them in the difficult beginnings of the  
New Covenant.

Intercede for us so that your example may remind us  
to care for the presence of Jesus and Mary in our lives,  
in the trials of today's world.

—*Blessings and Prayers for Home and Family*



Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your merciful love;  
according to your great compassion,  
blot out my transgressions.

O wash me completely from my guilt,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

My transgressions, truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.

Rescue me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and then my tongue shall ring out your righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

—Psalm 51:3-5, 16-17

## *Prayer at Night*

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

*Briefly consider your day: What did I do well? What could I have done better? Whom did I offend? Whom did I help or encourage?*

*Pray the Act of Contrition or another prayer of sorrow and promise of amendment.*

### PSALM 91:1-2, 5-6, 10-11

You who dwell in the Most High's hidden place,  
and abide in the shade of the Almighty,  
say to the LORD, "My refuge,  
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!"

You will not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day,  
nor the plague that prowls in the darkness,  
nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

Upon you no evil shall fall,  
no plague approach your tent.  
For you has God commanded the angels  
to keep you in all your ways.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19, 23-24

**R**ejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit.

May the God of peace himself make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved



blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

**ANTIPHON**

Protect us, Lord, while we are awake and safeguard us while we sleep, that we may keep watch with Christ and rest in peace.

**CANTICLE OF SIMEON**

Lord, now let your servant go in peace;  
your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:

a light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father . . .

**MARIAN ANTIPHON** (or another Marian hymn, pp. 374–75)

Hail, O Mary, Queen of heaven,  
Queen of all the saints and angels,  
Root of Jesse, heaven's portal  
Source of light of all the world.

Now rejoice, O glorious Virgin,  
Blessed with beauty far surpassing  
All that ever was created!  
Pray for us to Christ the Lord.

**BLESSING**

May God grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end.  
May the divine assistance be always with us and with all  
our loved ones. Amen.



Sunday, March 1

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

### PSALM 100

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Cry out with joy to the LORD, all the earth.  
Serve the LORD with gladness.  
Come before God, singing for joy.

Know that the LORD is God,  
who made us, to whom we belong.  
We are God's people, the sheep of God's flock.

Enter the temple gates with thanksgiving  
and its courts with songs of praise.  
Give thanks and bless God's name.

Indeed, how good is the LORD,  
eternal God's merciful love.  
God is faithful from age to age.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Wisdom 1:16; 2:21–24

It was the wicked who with hands and words invited death,  
/ considered it a friend, and pined for it, / and made a  
covenant with it, / Because they deserve to be allied with it.

These were their thoughts, but they erred; / for their  
wickedness blinded them, / And they did not know the  
hidden counsels of God; / neither did they count on a

recompense for holiness / nor discern the innocent souls' reward. / For God formed us to be imperishable; / the image of his own nature he made us. / But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world, / and they who are allied with him experience it.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Death came to all through sin, but life comes to all through the obedience of Christ.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Almighty God, in Jesus you teach us your hidden wisdom. Be with us in our Lenten journey as we pray:

**R**. Fulfill our hope for life in you, O God.

Transform our hearts so that we may reflect the light of Jesus to the world. **R**.

Counsel Pope Francis, bishops, and all the baptized who seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. **R**.

Strengthen us to show your love to those who are sick, infirm, or lonely. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May we prefer nothing to the obedient love of Christ, and may he bring us together to everlasting life. Amen.

# Mass

*First Sunday of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 91 (90):15-16

When he calls on me, I will answer him; / I will deliver him and give him glory, / I will grant him length of days.

(The Gloria is omitted.)

COLLECT

Grant, almighty God,  
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,  
that we may grow in understanding  
of the riches hidden in Christ  
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

2:7-9; 3:1-7

*The creation of our first parents, and sin.*

**T**he LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being.

Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made various trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the LORD God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in

the garden?” The woman answered the serpent: “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, ‘You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman: “You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is evil.” The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17

**R<sup>7</sup>.** (cf. 3a) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;  
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out  
my offense.

Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
and of my sin cleanse me. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

For I acknowledge my offense,  
and my sin is before me always:  
“Against you only have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight.” **R<sup>7</sup>.**

A clean heart create for me, O God,  
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.

Cast me not out from your presence,  
and your Holy Spirit take not from me. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Give me back the joy of your salvation,  
 and a willing spirit sustain in me.  
 O Lord, open my lips,  
 and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. **R7.**

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

**5:12-19 (Shorter Form [ ], 5:12, 17-19)**

*Where sin increased, there grace increased all the more.*

**[** Brothers and sisters: Through one man sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all men, inasmuch as all sinned]**]**—for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world, though sin is not accounted when there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin after the pattern of the trespass of Adam, who is the type of the one who was to come.

But the gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one, the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one man Jesus Christ overflow for the many. And the gift is not like the result of the one who sinned. For after one sin there was the judgment that brought condemnation; but the gift, after many transgressions, brought acquittal. **[**For if, by the transgression of the one, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so, through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.**]**

The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 4:4b

One does not live on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes forth from the mouth  
of God.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

4:1-11

*Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights and was tempted.*

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: *One does not live on bread alone, / but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.*"

Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: *He will command his angels concerning you / and with their hands they will support you, / lest you dash your foot against a stone.*" Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: *The Lord, your God, shall you worship / and him alone shall you serve.*"

Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.



CREED (p. 337)

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Give us the right dispositions, O Lord, we pray,  
to make these offerings,  
for with them we celebrate the beginning  
of this venerable and sacred time.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 4:4

One does not live by bread alone, / but by every word that  
comes forth from the mouth of God.

Or:

Cf. Psalm 91 (90):4

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, / and under  
his wings you will trust.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed now with heavenly bread,  
by which faith is nourished, hope increased,  
and charity strengthened,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that we may learn to hunger for Christ,  
the true and living Bread,  
and strive to live by every word  
which proceeds from your mouth.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Love the Gardener

We hear the whole story in a nutshell today. “Just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.” When Eve and Adam in the garden took possession of the fruit that gave the knowledge of good and evil, they wanted to have a good thing—wisdom—without the relationship with God that makes it good. Jesus, going into the desert, was offered food, protection, and lordship. These are good things that God promises to him and to us, but Jesus refused to accept them without the relationship with his Father that makes them good.

The fundamental reorientation of Lent is not about becoming better people, but rather, about living in Christ. When we hunger, when life seems barren, we are in the desert with Christ who was hungry. When our lives are full of fruit, we are in the garden, and Lent reminds us to love the Gardener more than the fruit. When we do not know what to say, we take the words of Scripture on our lips, as Jesus did. When we look at the kingdoms of the world, they cannot compare to our true King, who reigns in heaven. When we fail, we acknowledge our weaknesses and ask Christ to cover our sins with his obedience. Relying on the grace of our baptism, we find in Jesus the bread, the tree of life, the word of salvation, our Lord and our Savior.

Kimberly Hope Belcher

*Kimberly Hope Belcher is a married mother of three children and a professor of theology and liturgy at the University of Notre Dame.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 117

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

O praise the LORD, all you nations;  
acclaim God, all you peoples!

For God's faithful love toward us is great;  
the LORD remains faithful forever.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 4:14-16

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

### ANTIPHON

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

**INTERCESSIONS**

Shepherd of Israel, you guide your flock and care for those who stray. Secure in your love, we pray: **R7**. Watch over your people, O God.

Let your face shine on young people who struggle to belong or to find meaning in their lives. **R7**.

Widen our circle of concern to include those who are homeless, hungry, or hurting. **R7**.

Show mercy on those who have injured us, and forgive us our trespasses. **R7**.

**Our Father . . .**

May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts, now and always. Amen.



March 1–7

First Week of Lent

## *Within the Word*

### **Our Deepest Desires**

For many reasons, the second story of creation is a fitting opening for the First Sunday of Lent. Commonly referred to as the “Creation and Fall,” the story is so much more. It is an invitation for us to enter this season by reflecting on what it means to be human, to be in relationship with God and with other human beings, all of us with common desires and longings. In the broader Genesis story (2:4–3:24), we learn about human desire for beauty, food, companionship, and wisdom.

God plants many trees in the garden of Eden, all of them delightful to look at and good for food. But two trees are special: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The fruits of all the trees are meant to be eaten, with just one exception: the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2:15–17). Eating from that tree will result in death. The human desire for beauty and for food, while desirable, does have limits.

The serpent, a cunning creature who seems to be in competition with God, appears for the first time in the Bible in Genesis 3:1. There, in the garden, the serpent initiates a conversation with the woman, the details of which add depth and richness to the story. Notably, both the serpent and the woman add to God’s original instructions, revealing much about their own desires. The serpent exaggerates God’s prohibition, asking whether God had truly forbidden humans from eating the fruit of *any* of the trees. And the woman associates the prohibition with the tree in the middle of the garden, rather than the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Moreover, she adds that they are not even allowed to *touch* it.

The forbidden fruit is so desirable that the serpent easily engages the woman in conversation about it and entices her

to eat. The fruit will not cause death, the serpent cunningly hints. Rather, it will open their eyes to the divine knowledge of good and evil, as the tree's name implies. The serpent thus deepens the desirability of this tree for the woman: not only is it beautiful to see and good for food, it will also provide God-like knowledge.

The woman's fascination gets the better of her. She eats a piece and gives some to the man. As the serpent promised, their eyes are opened, and only then do they realize they are naked. Does this new knowledge make them like gods? No, rather, they become ashamed of their nakedness for the first time (2:25; 3:7).

In the interactions between the woman, the serpent, the man, and God, we observe that humans are social creatures. We share the desire for beauty, food, and wisdom. These desires, when taken too far, create disharmony. The final part of the narrative describes the consequences of the humans placing their trust in the serpent and ignoring God's instructions (3:8-24).

With the Creation and Fall as an opening for the First Sunday of Lent, the Gospel story of Jesus' temptation in the desert is even more fruitful. In this desert scene, the devil (a later title for the serpent) makes promises he is not in a position to fulfill. Goodness and life are infinitely stronger than evil and death.

Even when our desires run amok and we are tempted to turn from God and others, God's deepest desire is to love and forgive us. During this Lenten season let us pray to recognize our own desires and align them in accordance with our relationship with God.

—Sr. Joan Cook

*Joan Elizabeth Cook, SC, is the author of the Genesis volume in the New Collegeville Bible Commentary. She writes and speaks on biblical stories, biblical women, and biblical perspectives on the environment.*

Monday, March 2

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 65:2-4, 6, 9

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Praise is due to you in Zion, O God.  
To you we pay our vows in Jerusalem,  
you who hear our prayer.  
To you all flesh will come.  
Our evil deeds are too heavy for us,  
but only you can pardon our transgressions.

With wondrous deliverance you answer us,  
O God our savior.  
You are the hope of all the earth,  
and of far distant seas.

Distant peoples stand in awe  
at your wondrous deeds.  
The lands of sunrise and sunset  
you fill with your joy.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 24:14-15, 17-18

**Y**ou shall not exploit a poor and needy hired servant,  
whether one of your own kindred or one of the resi-  
dent aliens who live in your land, within your gates. On  
each day you shall pay the servant's wages before the sun  
goes down, since the servant is poor and is counting on



them. Otherwise the servant will cry to the LORD against you, and you will be held guilty.

You shall not deprive the resident alien or the orphan of justice, nor take the clothing of a widow as pledge. For, remember, you were slaves in Egypt, and the LORD, your God, redeemed you from there; that is why I command you to do this.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God our Savior, you are the hope of all the earth. We seek your compassion and pray: **R**. Show us mercy, O God.

Help us to be generous to our neighbor and kind to all we meet. **R**.

Give insight, courage, and faith to those who are discerning a call to the priesthood, diaconate, or religious life. **R**.

Inspire, uphold, and prosper efforts to address climate change and care for the earth. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God make us firm in faith, unwavering in hope, and steadfast in love, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. David of Wales

Bishop (ca. 500–ca. 589)

St. David, the patron of Wales, is one of the most popular of all British saints. Little is known of his life, the earliest accounts having been written many hundreds of years after his death. According to legend David (or Dewi in Welsh) was born of a princely family and received an education which included “the alphabet, the psalms, the lessons for the whole year and the divine office.” His fellow students “saw a golden-beaked dove playing at his lips and teaching him to sing the praise of God.” After studying with the great missionary saint, Paulinus, he was ordained a priest and embarked on his own missionary journey, founding churches and monasteries throughout Wales, including the abbey of Menevia, where he eventually settled.

St. David’s community lived in extreme austerity, consuming only bread, vegetables, and water. (Thus, St. David was dubbed “The Waterman.”) No personal property was allowed in the monastery, and he required that his monks pull their own plows, rather than rely on draft animals. David, who participated in two Church synods and was named a bishop, lived to an old age and died around the year 589.

*“Be joyful, brothers and sisters. Keep your faith, and do the little things that you have seen and heard with me. I will walk the path that our fathers have trod before us.”*

—Last words of St. David

The “Blessed Among Us” features are written by Robert Ellsberg, author of numerous books, including the best-selling *Blessed Among Us* (Liturgical Press).

# Mass

## Monday of the First Week of Lent

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 123 (122):2-3

Like the eyes of slaves on the hand of their lords, / so our eyes are on the Lord our God, till he show us his mercy. / Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

### COLLECT

Convert us, O God our Savior,  
and instruct our minds by heavenly teaching,  
that we may benefit from the works of Lent.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the Book of Leviticus

19:1-2, 11-18

*Judge your fellow man justly.*

**T**he LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the whole assembly of the children of Israel and tell them: Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.

“You shall not steal. You shall not lie or speak falsely to one another. You shall not swear falsely by my name, thus profaning the name of your God. I am the LORD.

“You shall not defraud or rob your neighbor. You shall not withhold overnight the wages of your day laborer. You shall not curse the deaf, or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but you shall fear your God. I am the LORD.

“You shall not act dishonestly in rendering judgment. Show neither partiality to the weak nor deference to the mighty, but judge your fellow men justly. You shall not go about spreading slander among your kin; nor shall you stand by idly when your neighbor’s life is at stake. I am the LORD.

“You shall not bear hatred for your brother in your heart. Though you may have to reprove him, do not incur sin because of him. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countrymen. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

19:8, 9, 10, 15

**R.** (John 6:63b) Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The law of the LORD is perfect,  
refreshing the soul.

The decree of the LORD is trustworthy,  
giving wisdom to the simple. **R.**

The precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart.

The command of the LORD is clear,  
enlightening the eye. **R.**

The fear of the LORD is pure,  
enduring forever;

The ordinances of the LORD are true,  
all of them just. **R.**

Let the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart  
find favor before you,

O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

2 Corinthians 6:2b

Behold, now is a very acceptable time;  
behold, now is the day of salvation.

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

25:31-46

*Whatever you have done to the very least of my brothers,  
you have done to me.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of

these least ones, you did not do for me.' And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this devout oblation be acceptable to you, O Lord, that by your power it may sanctify our manner of life and gain for us your conciliation and pardon. Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 25:40, 34

Amen, I say to you: / Whatever you did for one of the least of my brethren, / you did it for me, says the Lord. / Come, you blessed of my Father, / receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We pray, O Lord, that, in receiving your Sacrament, we may experience help in mind and body so that, kept safe in both, we may glory in the fullness of heavenly healing. Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Love and Nothing Else

*In the evening of life you will be examined on love.*

—St. John of the Cross

In the parable of the sheep and the goats Jesus makes it devastatingly clear that in the end it is only love of neighbour that counts—nothing else.

We shall not be examined on prayer, poverty, obedience or any of the other virtues; not because they are inessential but because they are real only insofar as we are wholly concerned with our neighbour.

You can't pray, obey, or be truly poor, says our Lord, unless you are wholly taken up with your brother's needs.

It is the "least" we must be concerned with: this implies and demands the absence of all self-seeking, just unremitting devotion.

No human heart is capable of such devotion, but Jesus asks it because what is impossible to man is possible to God. He has identified himself with us completely—"you did it, did it not . . . to me"—so that he may be our life.

What he asks we can therefore fulfil if we really want to,  
if we pray from our hearts,  
if we really take the trouble to do all we can do.

Sr. Ruth Burrows, *Living Love*

*Ruth Burrows, a Carmelite nun at Quidenham Monastery in Norfolk, England, is the author of several best-selling books on spirituality and prayer.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 85:2-8

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O LORD, you have favored your land,  
and brought back the captives of Jacob.  
You forgave the guilt of your people,  
and covered all their sins.  
You averted all your rage;  
you turned back the heat of your anger.

Bring us back, O God, our savior!  
Put an end to your grievance against us.  
Will you be angry with us forever?  
Will your anger last from age to age?

Will you not restore again our life,  
that your people may rejoice in you?  
Show us, O LORD, your mercy,  
and grant us your salvation.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 1:13-16

**G**]ird up the loins of your mind, live soberly, and set your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Like obedient children, do not act in compliance with the desires of your former



ignorance but, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, “Be holy because I [am] holy.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

You shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of mercy, you are the Source of all truth and lasting peace. In hope we pray: **R7.** Help us to live by your word, O God.

Sensitize and educate us about the plight of refugees, immigrants, and migrants. **R7.**

Strengthen us to break through the chains of prejudice, bigotry, and dominance. **R7.**

Support young people who seek to serve in the Peace Corps or other volunteer organizations. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God give us the grace to persevere in faith, hope, and love, through Jesus our liberator from death. Amen.

Tuesday, March 3

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 19:2-7

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

The heavens declare the glory of God,  
whose handiwork the firmament proclaims.

Day unto day conveys the message,  
and night unto night imparts the knowledge.

No speech, no word, whose voice goes unheeded;  
their sound goes forth through all the earth,  
their message to the utmost bounds of the world.

There God has placed a tent for the sun;  
it comes forth like a bridegroom coming from his tent,  
rejoices like a champion to run its course.

At one end of the heavens is the rising of the sun;  
to its furthest end it runs its course.  
There is nothing concealed from its burning heat.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Sirach 51:10-12

called out: LORD, you are my Father, / my champion, my  
savior! / Do not abandon me in time of trouble, / in the  
midst of storms and dangers. / I will always praise your  
name / and remember you in prayer!

Then the LORD heard my voice, / and listened to my appeal. / He saved me from every evil / and preserved me in time of trouble. / For this reason I thank and praise him; / I bless the name of the LORD.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

When you pray, say, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Ever-living God, you are our refuge, from age to age. In confidence we pray: **R<sup>7</sup>**. Guide our steps, O God.

Increase your Church's advocacy for those who suffer unjust treatment. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Instruct the hearts of those who are entrusted with the education of young people. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Protect construction workers, transportation personnel, and firefighters from harm. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

**Our Father . . .**

May God animate us to receive the Gospel with joy and to dedicate ourselves to living the Gospel in love and peace, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

## *Blessed Among Us*

### **St. Teresa Verzeri**

Founder, Daughters of the Sacred Heart (1801–1852)

Teresa Verzeri was born in Bergamo, Italy, in 1801. It was a period of great social upheaval, and Teresa spent many years searching for her path. According to her Vatican biography, “Interiorly Teresa lived the special mystic experience of the ‘absence of God,’ anticipating something of the religious life of today. . . . Her lonely cry, like that of Jesus, became the entrusting of her whole self through love.”

After an unsuccessful stint in a Benedictine community, Teresa followed the counsel of her spiritual director in founding an institute that would combine contemplative life with teaching. This became the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. She prepared for her community not only a rule but a voluminous Book of Duties that outlined the governing spirit. The Daughters, she wrote, in drawing their charity from the Heart of Jesus, should burn with “the purist charity that has no aim save for the glory of God and the good of souls; universal charity that excludes no one but embraces all; generous charity that does not draw back from suffering, is not alarmed by contradiction, but rather, in suffering and opposition, grows in vigor and conquers through patience.”

The work of the Daughters extended to schools for the poor, care for sick women, the rescue of women imperiled by trafficking, and retreats for laywomen. Over time, foundations spread to three continents. Mother Teresa died on March 3, 1852. She was canonized in 2001.

*“Jesus Christ has given the precious gift of his Heart, for from no one else can you learn holiness, he being the inexhaustible source of true holiness.”*

—St. Teresa Verzeri

# Mass

*Tuesday of the First Week of Lent*

[*St. Katharine Drexel, opt. memorial*]

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 90 (89):1-2

O Lord, you have been our refuge, from generation to generation; / from age to age, you are.

COLLECT

Look upon your family, Lord,  
that, through the chastening effects of bodily discipline,  
our minds may be radiant in your presence  
with the strength of our yearning for you.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 55:10-11

*My word will do whatever I will.*

Thus says the LORD: / Just as from the heavens / the rain  
and snow come down / And do not return there / till  
they have watered the earth, / making it fertile and fruitful,  
/ Giving seed to the one who sows / and bread to the one  
who eats, / So shall my word be / that goes forth from my  
mouth; / It shall not return to me void, / but shall do my  
will, / achieving the end for which I sent it.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19

**R<sup>7</sup>. (18b) From all their distress God rescues the just.**

Glorify the LORD with me,  
let us together extol his name.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Look to him that you may be radiant with joy,  
and your faces may not blush with shame.  
When the poor one called out, the LORD heard,  
and from all his distress he saved him. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

The LORD has eyes for the just,  
and ears for their cry.

The LORD confronts the evildoers,  
to destroy remembrance of them from the earth. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

When the just cry out, the LORD hears them,  
and from all their distress he rescues them.

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted;  
and those who are crushed in spirit he saves. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 4:4b

One does not live on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes forth from the mouth  
of God.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

6:7-15

*This is how you are to pray.*

**J**esus said to his disciples: “In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

“This is how you are to pray: / Our Father who art in heaven, / hallowed be thy name, / thy Kingdom come, / thy will be done, / on earth as it is in heaven. / Give us this day our daily bread; / and forgive us our trespasses, / as we forgive those who trespass against us; / and lead us not into temptation, / but deliver us from evil.

“If you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Creator, almighty God,  
what we bring from your bountiful goodness,  
and be pleased to transform  
this temporal sustenance you have given us,  
that it may bring us eternal life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 4:2

When I called, the God of justice gave me answer; / from anguish you released me; / have mercy, O Lord, and hear my prayer!

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant us through these mysteries, Lord,  
that by moderating earthly desires  
we may learn to love the things of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### The Grace of Prayer

St. Augustine emphasized the importance of God's initiative in us prior to any decision, choice, or action on our part. He developed a theology of "prevenient grace," which means the Holy Spirit makes the first move in us, that God's grace is always present to us and gives us the ability to exercise free will and choose the good.

Prayer, when it is not viewed as merely a compulsory activity, can be seen arising from this gift of God to us. The prophet Isaiah's description of God's word going forth to work in the world in creative and generative ways invites reflection on where the first impetus to pray surfaces. It is God who reaches out to us, empowers us, invites us to relationship, and enables us to say yes to love in return. As one of the prefaces to the Eucharistic Prayer reminds us, our prayer is itself a gift from God—it is the returning of God's word back to God in love.

When Jesus instructs his followers to pray, he does so with a sense that God is already at work in their lives. He reminds them that God knows them; that God is, as Augustine also said, the one "who is closer to us than we are to ourselves." The nature of our prayer ought to be a response to grace, an affirmation that we will seek to do God's will. When we pray this Lent and beyond, may we become more attuned to the grace that makes prayer possible in the first place.

Fr. Daniel P. Horan

*Daniel P. Horan, OFM, is a Franciscan friar, the author of several books, including Reading, Praying, Living Pope Francis's Rejoice and Be Glad, and a faculty member at the Catholic Theological Union (Chicago).*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 30:2, 5-13

I will extol you, LORD, for you have raised me up,  
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

Sing psalms to the LORD, you faithful ones;  
give thanks to God's holy name.

Divine anger lasts a moment, but favor all through life.  
At night come tears, but dawn brings joy.

I said to myself in my good fortune:  
“I shall never be shaken.”

O LORD, your favor had set me like a mountain stronghold.  
Then you hid your face, and I was put to confusion.

To you, O LORD, I cried,  
to my Lord I appealed for mercy:

“What profit is my lifeblood, my going to the grave?  
Can dust give you thanks, or proclaim your faithfulness?”

Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me;  
be my helper, O LORD.

You have changed my mourning into dancing,  
removed my sackcloth and girded me with joy.

So let my soul sing psalms to you and not be silent.  
O LORD my God, I will thank you forever.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:24-27

| In hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is  
 not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope  
 for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of justice, you save those who are crushed in spirit. In hope we pray: **R7.** Lead us along the way of everlasting life, O God.

Uphold efforts to advance respect for life, and help us end abortion, poverty, and the death penalty. **R7.**

Strengthen the bonds of support and friendship in faith communities. **R7.**

Animate all the baptized to be ambassadors of Christ's peace and reconciliation. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God strengthen us inwardly by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we may embrace the paschal mystery and come to share in the joys of holy Easter. Amen.

Wednesday, March 4

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 147:12-20

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O Jerusalem, glorify the LORD!  
O Zion, praise your God,  
who has strengthened the bars of your gates,  
and has blessed your children within you;  
who established peace on your borders,  
and gives you your fill of finest wheat.

The Lord sends out his word to the earth;  
the divine command runs swiftly.  
God showers down snow like wool,  
and scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

The Lord hurls down hailstones like crumbs;  
before such cold, who can stand?  
God sends forth a word and it melts them;  
at the blowing of God's breath the waters flow.

The Lord reveals a word to Jacob;  
to Israel, decrees and judgments.  
God has not dealt thus with other nations,  
has not taught them heaven's judgments.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Kings 10:1, 4, 5b-6, 9

**T**he queen of Sheba, having heard a report of Solomon's fame, came to test him with subtle questions. When

the queen of Sheba witnessed Solomon's great wisdom, the house he had built . . . and the burnt offerings he offered in the house of the LORD, it took her breath away. "The report I heard in my country about your deeds and your wisdom is true," she told the king. "Blessed be the LORD, your God, who has been pleased to place you on the throne of Israel. In his enduring love for Israel, the LORD has made you king to carry out judgment and justice."

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The queen of the south came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Forgiving God, you are merciful to those who wholeheartedly turn to you. In hope we pray: **R7**. Nourish our joy, O God.

Bless those who seek a fresh start, a new perspective, or reconciliation. **R7**.

Grant courage, peace, and right judgment to those who are discerning a difficult decision or a vocational call. **R7**.

Gladden the hearts of those who devote themselves to living the Gospel in the single life. **R7**.

Our Father . . .

May God purify our hearts and renew in us a steadfast spirit in Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Blessed Concepción Cabrera de Armida

Mystic (1862–1937)

Concepción Cabrera de Armida, who was born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, married at the age of twenty-two and bore nine children. When she was thirty-nine her husband died, leaving her alone to care for her children. Despite her trials, she maintained a disciplined life of prayer and enjoyed frequent mystical colloquies with Jesus and Mary. These she recorded in handwritten notes that eventually totaled 60,000 pages, resulting in 200 books. This fulfilled a message reportedly received from God: “Ask me for a long suffering life and to write a lot. . . . That’s your mission on earth.”

Her writings on the Eucharist, prayer, and the spiritual life were examined and viewed favorably by Church authorities. Some of them were distributed, inspiring the foundation of five apostolates of the “Work of the Cross,” including religious and priestly congregations.

Conchita, as she was known, died on March 3, 1937, in Mexico City. She was beatified in 2019.

*“I carry within me three lives, all very strong: family life with its multiple sorrows of a thousand kinds, that is, the life of a mother; the life of the Works of the Cross with all its sorrows and weight, which at times crushes me until I have no strength left; and the life of the spirit or interior life, which is the heaviest of all, with its highs and lows, its tempests and struggles, its light and darkness. Blessed be God for everything!”*

—Blessed Concepción Cabrera de Armida

# Mass

*Wednesday of the First Week of Lent*

[*St. Casimir, opt. memorial*]

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 25 (24):6, 2, 22

Remember your compassion, O Lord, / and your merciful love, for they are from of old. / Let not our enemies exult over us. / Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.

## COLLECT

Look kindly, Lord, we pray,  
on the devotion of your people,  
that those who by self-denial are restrained in body  
may by the fruit of good works be renewed in mind.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

## A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jonah

3:1-10

*The Ninevites turned from their evil way.*

**T**he word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: "Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and announce to it the message that I will tell you." So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh, according to the LORD's bidding. Now Nineveh was an enormously large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began his journey through the city, and had gone but a single day's walk announcing, "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed," when the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in the ashes. Then he had this proclaimed

throughout Nineveh, by decree of the king and his nobles: “Neither man nor beast, neither cattle nor sheep, shall taste anything; they shall not eat, nor shall they drink water. Man and beast shall be covered with sackcloth and call loudly to God; every man shall turn from his evil way and from the violence he has in hand. Who knows, God may relent and forgive, and withhold his blazing wrath, so that we shall not perish.” When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19

**R<sub>1</sub>.** (19b) A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;  
 in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.  
 Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
 and of my sin cleanse me. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

A clean heart create for me, O God,  
 and a steadfast spirit renew within me.  
 Cast me not out from your presence,  
 and your Holy Spirit take not from me. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

For you are not pleased with sacrifices;  
 should I offer a burnt offering, you would not accept it.  
 My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;  
 a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will  
 not spurn. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Joel 2:12-13

Even now, says the LORD,  
 return to me with your whole heart  
 for I am gracious and merciful.

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 11:29-32**

*No sign will be given to this generation except the sign of Jonah.*

**W**hile still more people gathered in the crowd, Jesus said to them, “This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. At the judgment the queen of the south will rise with the men of this generation and she will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and there is something greater than Solomon here. At the judgment the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because at the preaching of Jonah they repented, and there is something greater than Jonah here.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

We offer to you, O Lord,  
what you have given to be dedicated to your name,  
that, just as for our benefit you make these gifts  
a Sacrament,  
so you may let them become for us an eternal remedy.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Cf. Psalm 5:12**

All who take refuge in you shall be glad, O Lord, / and  
ever cry out their joy, and you shall dwell among them.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

O God, who never cease to nourish us by your Sacrament,  
grant that the refreshment you give us through it  
may bring us unending life.  
Through Christ our Lord.



## Reflection

### Love Born in Sorrow

My soul is trying to awaken and discover again the beauty of penance. I am ashamed of having made so many confessions of my faults in the monastery with so little sorrow and so feeble a hope of doing better. I want to say, over and over again, that I am sorry. I do not know how I can go on living unless I convince you, Jesus, that I am really sorry. The psalms say this better than I ever could. I am sorry that it has taken me so long to begin to discover the psalms. I am sorry that I have not lived them.

I am sorry for having let myself become so stupid and so torpid, thinking more of myself than of what I owe to your Love—and I owe You everything. Forgive me for paying so little attention. Without compunction and deep sorrow, contemplation is likely to be nothing more than a kind of idolatry. How can I love You if I do not know who I am and who You are? And how can I know this without sorrow? Jesus, I no longer want to have anything to do with love that forgets that it was born in sorrow, and therefore forgets to be grateful. Otherwise I will only go on lying to You, and I want to be done with insincerity forever and forever.

Thomas Merton, *Journal*, 1950

*Thomas Merton (1915–1968) was a Trappist monk of the Abbey of Gethsemani. He is widely esteemed as a writer and spiritual master.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 137:1-5, 7-9

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

By the rivers of Babylon  
there we sat and wept,  
remembering Zion;  
on the poplars that grew there  
we hung up our harps.

For it was there that they asked us,  
our captors, for songs,  
our oppressors, for joy.  
“Sing to us,” they said,  
“one of Zion’s songs.”

O how could we sing  
the song of the LORD  
on foreign soil?  
If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither!

Remember, O LORD,  
against the children of Edom  
the day of Jerusalem,  
when they said, “Tear it down!  
Tear it down to its foundations!”

O daughter Babylon, destroyer,  
blessed who repays you the payment you paid to us!  
Blessed who grasps and shatters your children on  
the rock!

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Peter 3:8-10

**D**o not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard “delay,” but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

God desires that all should come to repentance and be saved.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Faithful God, in this time of repentance we cry out for your mercy and pray: **R7.** O God, heed our prayer.

Free the oppressed, guide exiles, and shelter those who are fleeing from danger. **R7.**

Strengthen and comfort those who struggle with physical, emotional, or mental afflictions. **R7.**

Welcome into the light of your presence those who have died with their hope fixed on you. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless our works, our labor, and our perseverance, through Jesus our peace. Amen.

Thursday, March 5

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 37:7-9, 37-40

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Be still before the LORD and wait in patience;  
do not fret at the one who prospers,  
the one who makes evil plots.

Calm your anger and forget your rage;  
do not fret, it only leads to evil.  
For those who do evil shall perish.  
But those who hope in the LORD,  
they shall inherit the land.

Mark the blameless, observe the upright;  
for the peaceful a future lies in store,  
but sinners shall all be destroyed,  
the future of the wicked cut off.

But from the LORD comes the salvation of the righteous,  
their stronghold in time of distress.  
The LORD helps them and rescues them,  
rescues and saves them from the wicked,  
for their refuge is in God.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Judith 9:11-12, 14

**Y**our strength is not in numbers, nor does your might  
depend upon the powerful. You are God of the lowly,

helper of those of little account, supporter of the weak, protector of those in despair, savior of those without hope.

“Please, please, God of my father, God of the heritage of Israel, Master of heaven and earth, Creator of the waters, King of all you have created, hear my prayer! Make every nation and every tribe know clearly that you are God, the God of all power and might, and that there is no other who shields the people of Israel but you alone.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Lord, save us by your power; we have no one to help but you.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Good and kind God, your love endures forever. In faith we pray: **R7.** Hear us, O God.

Answer the pleas of the faithful, and fulfill the hopes of those who set their hearts on you. **R7.**

Strengthen those who are in recovery for addiction, and shower your love upon their families. **R7.**

Watch over political prisoners, and help us to end all forms of torture and organized crime. **R7.**

**Our Father . . .**

May God strengthen us to love our neighbor and offer mercy in Jesus' name, by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## *Blessed Among Us*

### **St. Gerasimus**

Hermit (d. 475)

Born in Lycia in Asia Minor, St. Gerasimus was moved to abandon his wealthy life and live as a hermit in Palestine. Settling on the Jordan, he attracted many disciples, whom he organized into a community of hermitages. Their rule was extremely severe. The hermits lived on dates, bread, and water, dividing their time between prayer and manual labor (basket weaving). They slept on reed mats and were allowed no fire in their cells. Despite this austerity, the fame of Gerasimus's community extended throughout the Eastern Church. He is said to have attended the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451.

One day Gerasimus came upon a lion in terrible pain. Examining the animal, he discovered and extracted a thorn from its paw. After he had nursed the lion back to health, it became his devoted companion. When, many years later, the old abbot died, his lion could not be consoled. Stretching himself over the grave of his beloved master, he remained there for several days until he too expired.

Among the lives of the saints, there are many examples of such special friendships with animal companions. In art, St. Jerome, who also settled in Palestine, is often depicted with a lion. But this is surely a confusion based on the Latin spelling of his name, Geronimus. The lion belonged to St. Gerasimus.

*“Our friend has left us orphans and has gone to join the Master whom he served, but do thou take thy food and eat.”*

—St. Gerasimus's successor, comforting his disconsolate lion

# Mass

*Thursday of the First Week of Lent*

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 5:2-3

To my words give ear, O Lord; give heed to my sighs. /  
Attend to the sound of my cry, my King and my God.

## COLLECT

Bestow on us, we pray, O Lord,  
a spirit of always pondering on what is right  
and of hastening to carry it out,  
and, since without you we cannot exist,  
may we be enabled to live according to your will.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

## A reading from the Book of Esther

C:12, 14-16, 23-25

*I have no protector other than you, LORD.*

Queen Esther, seized with mortal anguish, had recourse to the LORD. She lay prostrate upon the ground, together with her handmaids, from morning until evening, and said: “God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, blessed are you. Help me, who am alone and have no help but you, for I am taking my life in my hand. As a child I used to hear from the books of my forefathers that you, O LORD, always free those who are pleasing to you. Now help me, who am alone and have no one but you, O LORD, my God.

“And now, come to help me, an orphan. Put in my mouth persuasive words in the presence of the lion and turn his heart to hatred for our enemy, so that he and those who are in league with him may perish. Save us from the hand of

our enemies; turn our mourning into gladness and our sorrows into wholeness.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 7c-8

**R<sup>7</sup>.** (3a) Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me.

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart,  
for you have heard the words of my mouth;  
in the presence of the angels I will sing your praise;  
I will worship at your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Because of your kindness and your truth;  
for you have made great above all things  
your name and your promise.

When I called, you answered me;  
you built up strength within me. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Your right hand saves me.

The LORD will complete what he has done for me;  
your kindness, O LORD, endures forever;  
forsake not the work of your hands. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Psalm 51:12a, 14a

A clean heart create for me, God;  
give me back the joy of your salvation.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

7:7-12

*Everyone who asks, receives.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a



stone when he asked for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asked for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him.

“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be merciful, O Lord, to those who approach you in supplication,  
and, accepting the oblations and prayers of your people,  
turn the hearts of us all towards you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 7:8

Everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds;  
/ and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We pray, O Lord our God,  
that, as you have given these most sacred mysteries  
to be the safeguard of our salvation,  
so you may make them a healing remedy for us,  
both now and in time to come.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

Cookie? Cookie? Cookie?

My prayer life is filled with petitions: Prayers for the soul of a local man killed by a storm-driven tree branch (that he may

be welcomed into heaven and his family consoled). Prayers for the welfare of those huddled at borders or adrift at sea (that they may receive the help they need). Prayers for my spouse and, with him, fervent prayer for our mostly adult children (good choices, people, I'm begging here!).

I pray for myself as well, for wisdom and energy and insight. I pray for discernment, for the ability to know and choose the good.

Laudable as all these petitions might be, they lack a certain focus. I can't seem to zero in on a deliverable. Beseeking God for "all the best," as I often sign my email, seems, in the light of today's readings, to be a little . . . wiggly.

Esther wasn't weighing options in a comfortable chair. She had a goal, begged God for success, and went after it. Jesus exhorts us to do the same, lifting up the single-mindedness of a child's request. Children persevere—Cookie? Cookie? Cookie? They ask for specific things, they focus on the good of these things, and they believe their prayer will be granted.

Yes, not all prayers can or should be fulfilled; magic is not the point here. But what I have passed off as a self-effacing stance ("Thy will be done") now just seems vacuous: "If something kind of nice could happen for so-and-so, or maybe someone else who needs it more, that would be good. But whatever." This isn't petition, this is self-comfort talk for someone who doesn't want anything to change, including herself.

What if I thought otherwise?

Nancy Dallavalle

*Nancy Dallavalle is associate professor of religious studies at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 145:1-9

I will extol you, my God and King,  
and bless your name forever and ever.

I will bless you day after day,  
and praise your name forever and ever.  
The LORD is great and highly to be praised;  
God's greatness cannot be measured.

Age to age shall proclaim your works,  
shall declare your mighty deeds.  
They will tell of your great glory and splendor,  
and recount your wonderful works.

They will speak of your awesome deeds,  
recount your greatness and might.  
They will recall your abundant goodness,  
and sing of your righteous deeds with joy.

The LORD is kind and full of compassion,  
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.  
How good are you, O LORD, to all,  
compassionate to all your creatures.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 John 3:21-24

**B**eloved, if [our] hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should

believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit that he gave us.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Compassionate God, you are slow to anger and abounding in mercy. In confidence we pray: **R7.** Give us life in you, O God.

Lead children and adolescents to know your unconditional love and to experience friendship with Jesus. **R7.**

Reveal your glory in the love that your Church shows for the poor, the vulnerable, and the immigrant. **R7.**

Heal those who suffer from the Ebola crisis, and prosper the efforts to combat and control the spread of diseases. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God show us mercy and grant us salvation, through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Friday, March 6

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 51:12-19

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Create a pure heart for me, O God;  
renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence;  
take not your holy spirit from me.

Restore in me the joy of your salvation;  
sustain in me a willing spirit.  
I will teach transgressors your ways,  
that sinners may return to you.

Rescue me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and then my tongue shall ring out your righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

For in sacrifice you take no delight;  
burnt offering from me would not please you.  
My sacrifice to God, a broken spirit:  
a broken and humbled heart,  
you will not spurn, O God.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 44:21-23

Remember these things, Jacob, / Israel, for you are my  
servant! / I formed you, a servant to me; / Israel, you

shall never be forgotten by me: / I have brushed away your offenses like a cloud, / your sins like a mist; / return to me, for I have redeemed you.

Raise a glad cry, you heavens—the LORD has acted! / Shout, you depths of the earth. / Break forth, mountains, into song, / forest, with all your trees. / For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, / shows his glory through Israel.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

If you repent, you shall surely live.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Merciful God, you free us from our suffering and take away our sins. We humbly pray to you: **R7.** God, in your mercy, heed our prayer.

Transform our hearts through our bodily discipline, participation in the sacraments, and spiritual practices. **R7.**

Uphold those who suffer grief, grave disappointment, or great loss. **R7.**

Restore hope in those whose lives have been devastated by fire or storm, drought or flood. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God sustain us by the love of Christ and satisfy the longing of our hearts, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

**Jean-Pierre de Caussade**

Jesuit and Spiritual Director (1675–1751)

Little is known of this French Jesuit, whose priestly life was spent in a series of relatively obscure assignments. For one year he served as spiritual director to a community of Visitation nuns. To them he addressed a series of letters and conferences, published a century after his death as *Abandonment to Divine Providence*. It was quickly recognized as a spiritual classic, and on this work his reputation rests.

The theme of the book is easily summarized. In brief, it outlines the path to holiness that lies in the performance of our everyday tasks and duties. Every moment, according to Caussade, is given to us from God and thus bears the stamp of God's will for us. When we "accept what we cannot avoid and endure with love and resignation things which could cause us weariness and disgust," we are following the path to sanctification.

Among the key words in Caussade's work are "the present moment." It is even possible, he claims, to speak of "the sacrament of the present moment." Just as Christ, in the Eucharist, is visible to the eyes of faith, so to the faithful Christian it should be evident that God's will is truly present, though disguised, in what otherwise might be dismissed as the ordinary and everyday. "Every moment we live through," he wrote, "is like an ambassador who declares the will of God." By living in this spirit of mindfulness and abandonment, our own lives become holy texts, a "living gospel." Fr. de Caussade died on March 6, 1751.

*"The Holy Spirit writes no more Gospels except in our hearts. . . . We, if we are holy, are the paper; our sufferings . . . are the ink. The workings of the Holy Spirit are his pen, and with it he writes a living gospel."*

—Jean-Pierre de Caussade, SJ

# Mass

*Friday of the First Week of Lent*

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 25 (24):17-18

Set me free from my distress, O Lord. / See my lowliness and suffering, / and take away all my sins.

## COLLECT

Grant that your faithful, O Lord, we pray, may be so conformed to the paschal observances, that the bodily discipline now solemnly begun may bear fruit in the souls of all.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel 18:21-28**

*Do I derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked and not rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live?*

**T**hus says the Lord GOD: If the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says the Lord GOD. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live?

And if the virtuous man turns from the path of virtue to do evil, the same kind of abominable things that the wicked man does, can he do this and still live? None of his virtuous deeds shall be remembered, because he has broken faith and committed sin; because of this, he shall die. You say, "The LORD's way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is



it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When someone virtuous turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if the wicked, turning from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins that he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8

**R.** (3) If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, who can stand?

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;  
LORD, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive  
to my voice in supplication. **R.**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,  
LORD, who can stand?  
But with you is forgiveness,  
that you may be revered. **R.**

I trust in the LORD;  
my soul trusts in his word.  
My soul waits for the LORD  
more than sentinels wait for the dawn.  
Let Israel wait for the LORD. **R.**

For with the LORD is kindness  
and with him is plenteous redemption;  
And he will redeem Israel  
from all their iniquities. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ezekiel 18:31

Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed,  
says the LORD,  
and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

5:20-26

*Go first and be reconciled with your brother.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, *Raqa*, will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept the sacrificial offerings, O Lord,  
by which, in your power and kindness,  
you willed us to be reconciled to yourself  
and our salvation to be restored.

Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Ezekiel 33:11

As I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of the sinner, / but rather that he turn back and live.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May the holy refreshment of your Sacrament  
 restore us anew, O Lord,  
 and, cleansing us of old ways,  
 take us up into the mystery of salvation.  
 Through Christ our Lord.

**Reflection****Prisons of Our Own Making**

After Jesus' death and resurrection, St. Peter's zealous preaching about Jesus made him a dangerous man. So dangerous, he was thrown in prison, where he was guarded by four squads of soldiers and held with two chains. But God was able to free Peter (Acts 12:1-9).

Not all prisons have bars, chains, and guards. Sometimes the prison is of my own making. I can be imprisoned by my fears, however rational or irrational; by my prejudices; by my judgmentalism and anger. I define reality and my sense of self at the expense of someone else. I build myself up by tearing them down.

In the Gospel, Jesus puts a keen edge on the commandment, *You shall not kill*. He reminds us that killing others can include spirit- and soul-murder in the form of name calling, bullying, slander, and defamation. *Raqa* [empty-headed] and *fool* are probably mild compared to most of the things you and I have said to, and of, others.

It is unlikely we would ever do time for such epithets; yet, most of our unresolved anger and fear, and the sins related to them, lock us in a moral prison with a shackled spirit. We

become prisoners of the constricting circumference of mind and heart.

By the grace of God, may we turn away from our sins and do what is right and just so that we may live free and in peace with others. May we offer God the sacrifice of a pure and loving heart.

Fr. John Meoska

*John Meoska, OSB, is a monk of Saint John's Abbey and serves the community as formation director and novice master. He is also an avid woodworker.*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 119:9-16

How shall a youth remain pure on life's way?  
By obeying your word.  
I seek you with all my heart;  
let me not stray from your commands.

I treasure your word in my heart,  
lest I sin against you.  
Blest are you, O LORD;  
teach me your statutes.

With my lips have I recounted  
all the decrees of your mouth.  
I rejoice in the way of your precepts,  
as though all riches were mine.

I will ponder your precepts,  
and consider your paths.  
I take delight in your statutes;  
I will not forget your word.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 2:1-4

**Y**ou are without excuse, every one of you who passes judgment. For by the standard by which you judge another you condemn yourself, since you, the judge, do the very same things. We know that the judgment of God on those who do such things is true. Do you suppose, then, you who judge those who engage in such things and yet do

them yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you hold his priceless kindness, forbearance, and patience in low esteem, unaware that the kindness of God would lead you to repentance?

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Be reconciled to one another.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of our longing, your law of love is our delight. In faith we pray: **R**. Teach us your ways, O God.

Uproot the faults of your Church, and make her resplendent in the love and mercy of Christ. **R**.

Help us to address the causes of violence and hatred in our neighborhoods and cities. **R**.

Let us know the shortness of our lives, and bring wisdom to our hearts. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God create in us a new heart and a new spirit through Jesus, our hope for salvation. Amen.

Saturday, March 7

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 124

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

“If the LORD had not been on our side,”  
let Israel say—

“If the LORD had not been on our side  
when people rose against us,  
then would they have swallowed us alive  
when their anger was kindled.

“Then would the waters have engulfed us,  
the torrent gone over us;  
over our head would have swept  
the raging waters.”

Blest be the LORD who did not give us  
as prey to their teeth!  
Our life, like a bird, has escaped  
from the snare of the fowler.

Indeed, the snare has been broken,  
and we have escaped.  
Our help is in the name of the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Leviticus 19:2, 33–34

**S**peak to the whole Israelite community and tell them:  
Be holy, for I, the LORD your God, am holy.

When an alien resides with you in your land, do not mistreat such a one. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Eternal God, you call us to love our neighbor and to forgive our enemies. In faith we pray: **R7.** Favor us with your Spirit, O God.

Enlighten our minds and hearts by the light of faith and the discoveries of science. **R7.**

Bless those who give of their time, talents, and treasure to support the rebuilding of communities devastated by disaster or war. **R7.**

Help us to practice justice and to instill good sportsmanship in children and youth. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God be with us, draw us to Christ, and enrich us with every gift of the Spirit, now and always. Amen.



## Blessed Among Us

### Saints Perpetua and Felicity

Martyrs (d. 203)

“The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity,” an account of the martyrdom of a prosperous young woman and her servant in Carthage, is one of the most powerful and poignant documents of the early Church. Perpetua was twenty-two when she was arrested with her servant Felicity for violating a prohibition against conversion to Christianity. “The Passion,” written largely in the voice of Perpetua herself, depicts the struggle of a woman to claim her own identity and vocation against the claims of society. To the consul who appeals to her status as a wife, daughter, and mother, she simply names herself: “I am a Christian.” One senses that in Christ she has found the power and freedom to name herself and the courage to accept the consequences.

In a series of prophetic visions Perpetua is comforted by the assurance that her fate is ordained and her brief suffering will lead to eternal reward. She is consoled to be able to entrust her infant son to safe hands, and so receives the grace to bear whatever may come. Felicity, meanwhile, who is eight months pregnant at the time, goes into premature labor in her prison cell and is able to hand over her newborn daughter to Christian friends.

The next day the prisoners went forth from the darkness of their cell into the glaring amphitheater, “as it were to heaven, cheerful and bright of countenance.” They were stripped before the jeering crowd, and then, after exchanging a kiss of peace, they were exposed to wild beasts and put to the sword.

*“For this cause came we willingly unto this, that our liberty might not be obscured. For this cause have we devoted our lives.”*

—St. Perpetua

## Mass

*Saturday of the First Week of Lent*  
[*Saints Perpetua and Felicity, opt. memorial*]

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 19 (18):8

The law of the Lord is perfect; it revives the soul. / The decrees of the Lord are steadfast; they give wisdom to the simple.

### COLLECT

Turn our hearts to you, eternal Father,  
and grant that, seeking always the one thing necessary  
and carrying out works of charity,  
we may be dedicated to your worship.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

26:16-19

*You will be a people sacred to the LORD God.*

Moses spoke to the people, saying: “This day the LORD, your God, commands you to observe these statutes and decrees. Be careful, then, to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. Today you are making this agreement with the LORD: he is to be your God and you are to walk in his ways and observe his statutes, commandments and decrees, and to hearken to his voice. And today the LORD is making this agreement with you: you are to be a people peculiarly his own, as he promised you; and provided you keep all his commandments, he will then raise you high in praise and renown and glory above all other nations he has made, and you will be a people sacred to the LORD, your God, as he promised.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8

**R7. (1b) Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

Blessed are they whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the LORD.

Blessed are they who observe his decrees,  
who seek him with all their heart. **R7.**

You have commanded that your precepts  
be diligently kept.

Oh, that I might be firm in the ways  
of keeping your statutes! **R7.**

I will give you thanks with an upright heart,  
when I have learned your just ordinances.

I will keep your statutes;  
do not utterly forsake me. **R7.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

2 Corinthians 6:2b

Behold, now is a very acceptable time;  
behold, now is the day of salvation.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

5:43-48

*Be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “You have heard that it was said, *You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.* But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers and sisters only, what is unusual about that? Do

not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May these blessed mysteries  
by which we are restored, O Lord, we pray,  
make us worthy of the gift they bestow.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 5:48

Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect, says the Lord.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Show unceasing favor, O Lord,  
to those you refresh with this divine mystery,  
and accompany with salutary consolations  
those you have imbued with heavenly teaching.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Stupendous Folly

I might say that it is not enough to just merely not harm your enemies. Somehow or another, we must go beyond that. Love is not merely a weapon. It is not a strategy, and it may or may not work. To do good to those who hate you is such stupendous folly it can't be expected to work. Love didn't work for Jesus. No man has ever loved as he loved, but it didn't work. He wound up on a cross.

And yet, it *does* work if your motive is *not* to make it work. Love works in the home. But if you say, “Well, you know, it really works to love your wife. If you love her, she’ll darn your socks and bake you pie every day.” If that is the motive for love, I doubt that your wife will darn your socks or bake pies. But love does work. I think Abraham Lincoln said it so well one day. Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, a bitter man from Massachusetts, shared the sentiment in the North to just crush the South after the war was over. When Mr. Lincoln was advocating binding up the wounds of the nation, and ideas such as forgiveness, reconciliation, Thaddeus Stevens pounded the table and said, “Mr. Lincoln! I think enemies ought to be *destroyed!*” Mr. Lincoln quietly said, “Mr. Stevens, do not I destroy my enemy when I make him my friend?”

..... Clarence Jordan, *The Substance of Faith and Other Cotton Patch Sermons*

*Clarence Jordan (1912–1969), a farmer and New Testament Greek scholar, was the founder of Koinonia Farm, a small but influential religious community in southwest Georgia. He was also instrumental in founding Habitat for Humanity.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 81:2-4, 6c-11

Sing joyfully to God our strength,  
shout in triumph to the God of Jacob.  
Raise a song and sound the timbrel,  
the sweet-sounding lyre with the harp;  
blow the trumpet at the new moon,  
when the moon is full, on our feast.

A voice I did not know said to me:  
“I freed your shoulder from the burden;  
your hands were freed from the builder’s basket.  
You called in distress and I delivered you.

“I answered, concealed in the thunder;  
at the waters of Meribah I tested you.  
Listen, my people, as I warn you.  
O Israel, if only you would heed!

“Let there be no strange god among you,  
nor shall you worship a foreign god.  
I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you up from the land of Egypt.  
Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it.”

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:31-34

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son

but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ [Jesus] who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Today the Lord chooses you to be his own people.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Abiding God, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. In faith we pray: **R<sup>7</sup>**. God, in your wisdom, hear our prayer.

Thwart the plots of terrorists, and protect those whose lives are threatened by violence. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Advance fruitful dialogue, understanding, and respect among Christians, Muslims, and Jews. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Help us to show mercy to those who are homeless, marginalized, or forgotten. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Our Father . . .

May God root us in the love of Christ and animate us to live the mystery of salvation, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE  
TRANSFIGURATION





Sunday, March 8

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 150:1b-6a

Praise God in the holy temple;  
praise the Lord in the mighty firmament.  
Praise God for powerful deeds;  
for boundless grandeur, praise God.

O praise the Lord with sound of trumpet;  
give praise with lute and harp.  
Praise God with timbrel and dance;  
give praise with strings and pipes.

O praise God with resounding cymbals;  
give praise with clashing of cymbals.  
Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Kings 19:9b-12

**T**he word of the LORD came to him: Why are you here, Elijah? He answered: “I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, but the Israelites have forsaken your covenant. They have destroyed your altars and murdered your prophets by the sword. I alone remain, and they seek to take my life.” Then the LORD said: Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will pass by. There was a strong and violent wind rending the mountains and

crushing rocks before the LORD—but the LORD was not in the wind; after the wind, an earthquake—but the LORD was not in the earthquake; after the earthquake, fire—but the LORD was not in the fire; after the fire, a light silent sound.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

From the cloud a voice said, "This is my beloved Son."

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of light and darkness, by the transfiguration of Jesus you show us a vision of universal and eternal peace. In hope we pray: **R7.** Lead us along the everlasting way, O God.

Help your Church to proclaim, embody, and incarnate your saving word. **R7.**

Give holy perseverance to catechumens and candidates for confirmation. **R7.**

Strengthen people of faith to reverence all of life and to advocate for justice. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May the light of Christ shine in the Church, break through the world's darkness, and fill us with peace. Amen.

# Mass

## Second Sunday of Lent

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 27 (26):8-9

Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. / It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; / hide not your face from me.

### Or:

Cf. Psalm 25 (24):6, 2, 22

Remember your compassion, O Lord, / and your merciful love, for they are from of old. / Let not our enemies exult over us. / Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.

(The Gloria is omitted.)

### COLLECT

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the Book of Genesis

12:1-4a

*The call of Abraham, the father of God's people.*

**T**he LORD said to Abram: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.

"I will make of you a great nation, / and I will bless you; / I will make your name great, / so that you will be a blessing.

/ I will bless those who bless you / and curse those who curse you. / All the communities of the earth / shall find blessing in you.” / Abram went as the LORD directed him.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

**R.** (22) Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Upright is the word of the LORD,  
and all his works are trustworthy.  
He loves justice and right;  
of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full. **R.**

See, the eyes of the LORD are upon those who fear him,  
upon those who hope for his kindness,  
to deliver them from death  
and preserve them in spite of famine. **R.**

Our soul waits for the LORD,  
who is our help and our shield.  
May your kindness, O LORD, be upon us  
who have put our hope in you. **R.**

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul  
to Timothy

1:8b-10

*God has saved us and called us to be holy.*

**B**eloved: Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.

He saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ

Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cf. Matthew 17:5

From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard:

This is my beloved Son, listen to him.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

17:1-9

*Jesus' face shone like the sun.*

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

The Gospel of the Lord.

CREED (p. 337)

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

May this sacrifice, O Lord, we pray,  
cleanse us of our faults  
and sanctify your faithful in body and mind  
for the celebration of the paschal festivities.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Matthew 17:5**

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; /  
listen to him.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

As we receive these glorious mysteries,  
we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord,  
for allowing us while still on earth  
to be partakers even now of the things of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## *Reflection*

### **The Word Grows in Us**

Our Father said this to these Apostles, and says it to us as well: “listen to Jesus, because he is my beloved Son.” This week let us keep this word in our minds and in our hearts: “listen to Jesus!” And the Pope is not saying this, God the Father says it to everyone: to me, to you, to everyone, all people! It is like an aid for going forward on the path of Lent. “Listen to Jesus!” Don’t forget.

This invitation from the Father is very important. We, the disciples of Jesus, are called to be people who listen to his voice and take his words seriously. To listen to Jesus, we must be close to him, to follow him. . . .

From the event of the Transfiguration I would like to take two significant elements that can be summed up in two words: *ascent* and *descent*. We all need to go apart, to ascend the mountain in a space of silence, to find ourselves and better perceive the voice of the Lord. This we do in prayer. But we cannot stay there! Encounter with God in prayer inspires us anew to “descend the mountain” and return to the plain where we meet many brothers [and sisters] weighed down by fatigue, sickness, injustice, ignorance, poverty both material and spiritual. To these brothers [and sisters] in difficulty, we are called to bear the fruit of that experience with God, by sharing the grace we have received. And this is curious. When we hear the Word of Jesus, when we listen to the Word of Jesus and carry it in our heart, this Word grows. Do you know how it grows? By giving it to the other! The Word of Christ grows in us when we proclaim it, when we give it to others! And this is what Christian life is. It is a mission for the whole Church, for all the baptized, for us all: listen to Jesus and offer him to others.

..... Pope Francis, *Angelus*, March 16, 2014

*Prior to being elected pope on March 13, 2013, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 123

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

To you have I lifted up my eyes,  
you who dwell in the heavens.

Behold, like the eyes of slaves  
on the hand of their lords,  
like the eyes of a servant  
on the hand of her mistress,  
so our eyes are on the LORD our God,  
till mercy be shown us.

Have mercy on us, LORD, have mercy.  
We are filled with contempt.  
Indeed, all too full is our soul  
with the scorn of the arrogant,  
the disdain of the proud.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 12:18-24

**Y**ou have not approached that which could be touched and a blazing fire and gloomy darkness and storm and a trumpet blast and a voice speaking words such that those who heard begged that no message be further addressed to them, for they could not bear to hear the command: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” Indeed, so fearful was the spectacle that Moses said, “I am terrified and trembling.” No, you have approached Mount Zion and



the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Jesus was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Living God of our ancestors, you sent Christ into the world so that all who believe might have eternal life. In hope we pray: **R7.** Lead us along the path of life, O God.

Help us to be mindful of how our choices and actions will affect generations to come. **R7.**

Uphold efforts to provide support, health care, and financial aid to women in crisis pregnancies. **R7.**

Give unending joy and peace to all who have died with the hope of resurrection. **R7.**

**Our Father . . .**

May God be gracious to us, lead us by the light of Christ, and fill us with peace. Amen.

March 8–14

Second Week of Lent

## *Within the Word*

### **“Everything I Have Is Yours”**

One often hears of bitter disputes among siblings when it comes time to divide up the inheritance left by their parents. In Saturday’s parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus begins on a shocking note—the younger brother demands his share before the father is even dead! The older brother stands there mute when the father, without a word of protest, gives each son his share. The elder brother’s objections come later, when his brother returns home and the former fears his own portion will be jeopardized. Both sons display a sense of entitlement. They have calculated what they have coming to them and they are making sure they collect all of it. There is a considerable amount of inheritance involved. This is not a poor family. They have cattle and means to put on a feast. The father has a fine robe, sandals, and a ring to put on his son.

When the father hands over his considerable wealth to his sons, one would think they would be happy. But both end up miserable. The younger one squanders everything, while the older one hoards it all, not spending even a little bit to entertain his friends. Both complain about what they have not been given. The younger son, after using up all he had inherited, lowers his sights and would be satisfied with the slop fed to the swine, “but nobody gave him any.” The elder son complains bitterly to his father, “you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends.” This accusation is

puzzling, when the son has already been given everything the father has. It is equally surprising that the father, instead of angrily dismissing his son's baseless accusations, responds with a renewed invitation to joy, and a reminder: "everything I have is yours"—already!

But something has died in both sons. Their greed and jealousy have blinded them to the overflowing abundance that is theirs.

The first son has come back to life. He has hit rock bottom, believes he no longer deserves to be called "son," and acknowledges the wrong he has done his father and the whole community. What has brought him back to life is not his own coming to his senses and his own efforts to return to the source of his heritage. Rather, it is the father's unfailing love. The father seeks him out and flings open his arms, wrapping him in a mantle of forgiveness that resurrects in him the response of love and joy and gratitude, along with the sure knowledge that all is given freely and totally. This heritage cannot be earned and it is never depleted, even by our most egregious misuses.

As a figure of the divine, the father offers a gift of reconciliation that shatters the too-narrow vision of children vying for a bigger piece of the pie, when all along the whole of the inheritance is offered to each and all, with no bounds. This gift begins a process of healing that expands our puny estimation of our inheritance and opens our capacity to be transformed by the Giver, enlarging our capacity to pass on that heritage to others.

—Sr. Barbara Reid, adapted from *Abiding Word*

*Barbara Reid, OP, is professor of New Testament at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The author of numerous books, she is general editor of the Wisdom Commentary series (Liturgical Press).*

Monday, March 9

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 20:2-6, 8-10

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

May the LORD answer you in time of trial;  
may the name of Jacob's God protect you,  
sending you help from the holy place,  
and giving you support from Zion.

May God remember all your offerings,  
receive your sacrifice with favor,  
give you your heart's desire,  
and fulfill every one of your plans.

May we ring out our joy at your victory,  
and raise banners in the name of our God.  
May the LORD grant all your prayers.

Some put their trust in chariots or horses,  
but we in the name of the LORD, our God.  
They will collapse and fall,  
but we shall rise up and hold firm.  
Grant salvation to the king, O LORD,  
give answer on the day we call.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Amos 7:1-6

**T**his is what the Lord GOD showed me: He was forming a locust swarm when the late growth began to come up (the late growth after the king's mowing). When they

had finished eating the grass in the land, I said: / Forgive, O Lord GOD! / Who will raise up Jacob? / He is so small! / The LORD relented concerning this. “This shall not be,” said the Lord GOD.

This is what the Lord GOD showed me: He was summoning a rain of fire. It had devoured the great abyss and was consuming the fields. Then I said: / Cease, O Lord GOD! / Who will raise up Jacob? / He is so small! / The LORD relented concerning this. “This also shall not be,” said the Lord GOD.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Yours, O Lord, are compassion and forgiveness.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Saving God, you are the hope of all who call upon you in faith. Hear us as we pray: **R7.** Show us mercy, O God.

Gather your Church together as one in Christ Jesus, and heal divisions among Christians. **R7.**

Heal those who suffer mental illness, and strengthen their caregivers with every gift of the Holy Spirit. **R7.**

Prosper efforts to end gun violence, and protect citizens, refugees, and immigrants from harm. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God give us our heart’s desire and fulfill every one of our plans, through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Catherine of Bologna

Abbess and Mystic (1413–1463)

St. Catherine was born of a noble family in Bologna and raised in luxury. Yet at fourteen she persuaded her family to let her join a community of Franciscan tertiaries. From an early age she had experienced visions of Jesus, “who would enter into her soul like a radiant sunshine to establish there the profoundest peace.” But there were also demonic thoughts that sometimes plunged her into despair. Through constant prayer she vanquished such doubts, and one night during the Christmas vigil she was rewarded by an encounter with the Blessed Mother, who offered her the great privilege of holding her infant Son. “I leave you to picture the joy of this poor creature,” she wrote, “when she found herself holding the Son of the eternal Father in her arms.”

After some years Catherine was directed to take charge of a convent of Poor Clares in Bologna. Her reputed gifts of healing and prophecy—as well as her deep kindness—attracted many novices. Whenever she had to correct a young sister, she would insist on sharing her punishment. When one of the novices was tempted to leave, Catherine pledged to take her place in purgatory until the end of time if only she would remain. (The novice stayed.)

She died on March 9, 1463. Among her last instructions, she said, “If you would have all, you must give all.” Apart from several books, Catherine left behind a number of hymns and paintings. She is honored as a patron of artists.

*“It means little to wear a worn habit and walk with bowed head; to be truly humble one has to know how to bear humiliation. It is the touchstone of Christian discipleship.”*

—St. Catherine of Bologna

# Mass

*Monday of the Second Week of Lent*

[*St. Frances of Rome, opt. memorial*]

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 26 (25):11-12

Redeem me, O Lord, and have mercy on me. / My foot stands on level ground; / I will bless the Lord in the assembly.

COLLECT

O God, who have taught us  
to chasten our bodies  
for the healing of our souls,  
enable us, we pray,  
to abstain from all sins,  
and strengthen our hearts  
to carry out your loving commands.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel 9:4b-10

*We have sinned, been wicked and done evil.*

Lord, great and awesome God, you who keep your merciful covenant toward those who love you and observe your commandments! We have sinned, been wicked and done evil; we have rebelled and departed from your commandments and your laws. We have not obeyed your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. Justice, O Lord, is on your side; we are shamefaced even to this day: we, the men of Judah, the residents of Jerusalem, and all Israel, near and far, in all the countries to which you have

scattered them because of their treachery toward you. O LORD, we are shamefaced, like our kings, our princes, and our fathers, for having sinned against you. But yours, O Lord, our God, are compassion and forgiveness! Yet we rebelled against you and paid no heed to your command, O LORD, our God, to live by the law you gave us through your servants the prophets.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

79:8, 9, 11 and 13

**R<sup>7</sup>.** (see 103:10a) Lord, do not deal with us according to our sins.

Remember not against us the iniquities of the past;  
may your compassion quickly come to us,  
for we are brought very low. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Help us, O God our savior,  
because of the glory of your name;  
Deliver us and pardon our sins  
for your name's sake. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Let the prisoners' sighing come before you;  
with your great power free those doomed to death.  
Then we, your people and the sheep of your pasture,  
will give thanks to you forever;  
through all generations we will declare your praise. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

See John 6:63c, 68c

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life;  
you have the words of everlasting life.



A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 6:36-38

*Forgive and you will be forgiven.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept in your goodness these our prayers, O Lord,  
and set free from worldly attractions  
those you allow to serve the heavenly mysteries.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Luke 6:36

Be merciful, as your Father is merciful, says the Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this Communion, O Lord,  
cleanse us of wrongdoing  
and make us heirs to the joy of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### A Culture of Mercy

Two things to stop doing and two things to take up: no, to judgment and condemnation; yes, to forgiveness and generosity. With these four traits, Jesus forms in us a manner of life that embodies God's life in the world. Jesus calls us to be merciful as God is merciful.

Could there be a clearer and more direct description of the shape and purpose of a life of faith? And could anything be more challenging and scarce? From online put-downs of people we have never met, to instant assessments of politicians or circumstances we know little about, to the irony of condemning people for not condemning the things we do—there is a kind of rush, a feeling of self-satisfaction and self-justification, of setting ourselves above and against others. Yet about this, Jesus warns us all. “Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?” (Luke 6:41).

Instead of transmitting the values of our culture, we are meant to transform that very culture with the mercy of God, letting go of judgment and condemnation, taking up forgiveness and generosity—not from time to time but as a way of life. This life begins in Jesus himself. In love, he is given to the world in order to save and not condemn. In him, we receive forgiveness. And his generous self-giving life makes us rich in grace. We who know, trust, and delight in the mercy of God for our lives are called to a life of mercy for others.

Mark Strobel

*Mark Strobel is the dean of Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, Fargo, North Dakota, and is a Benedictine oblate of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 17:1-7

O LORD, hear a cause that is just,  
pay heed to my cry.

Turn your ear to my prayer:  
no deceit is on my lips.

From you may my justice come forth.  
Your eyes discern what is upright.

Search my heart and visit me by night.  
Test me by fire, and you will find no wrong in me.

My mouth does not transgress as others do;  
on account of the words of your lips,  
I have avoided the paths of the violent.

I kept my steps firmly in your paths.  
My feet have never faltered.

To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God.  
Turn your ear to me; hear my words.  
Display your faithful love,  
you who deliver from their foes  
those who trust in your right hand.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 John 3:11-16

**T**]his is the message you have heard from the beginning:  
we should love one another, unlike Cain who belonged  
to the evil one and slaughtered his brother. Why did he  
slaughter him? Because his own works were evil, and those

of his brother righteous. Do not be amazed, [then,] . . . if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Creating God, you have the words of everlasting life. In hope we pray to you: **R7.** Deliver us for your name's sake, O God.

Increase education on human trafficking, and help us to end all forms of abduction and slavery. **R7.**

Prosper efforts to ensure just wages and safe working conditions. **R7.**

Advance negotiations for peace in the Middle East and throughout the world. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God answer us in times of trial, deliver us from harm, and bless us with peace, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

Tuesday, March 10

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 84:2-8

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O LORD of hosts.

My soul is longing and yearning  
for the courts of the LORD.

My heart and my flesh cry out  
to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home,  
and the swallow a nest for herself  
in which she sets her young, at your altars,  
O LORD of hosts, my king and my God.

Blessed are they who dwell in your house,  
forever singing your praise.

Blessed the people whose strength is in you,  
whose hearts are set on the pilgrimage.

As they go through the Baca Valley,  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rain covers it with pools.  
They walk with ever-growing strength;  
the God of gods will appear in Zion.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 10:12, 17-19

**N**ow, therefore, Israel, what does the LORD, your God,  
ask of you but to fear the LORD, your God, to follow in

all his ways, to love and serve the LORD, your God, with your whole heart and with your whole being. For the LORD, your God, is the God of gods, the Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who has no favorites, accepts no bribes, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and loves the resident alien, giving them food and clothing. So you too should love the resident alien, for that is what you were in the land of Egypt.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Make justice your aim: hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Living God, even the swallow finds a home in you. We trust in your tender love and pray: **R<sub>7</sub>**. Favor and bless us, O God.

For families and individuals who have recently moved into new neighborhoods, parishes, and schools, we pray: **R<sub>7</sub>**.

For all who serve in the military and for their loved ones, we pray: **R<sub>7</sub>**.

For medical professionals and health-care personnel, we pray: **R<sub>7</sub>**.

Our Father . . .

May God bless us, look upon us with love, and favor us with every good gift, through Jesus our peace. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Harriet Tubman

Ex-Slave, Abolitionist (ca. 1820–1913)

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery on a plantation in Maryland. As she grew up she experienced the typical cruelties of slave life, the beatings and daily indignities. Like other slaves she became skilled in the art of passive resistance while struggling to maintain an inner conviction that she was worth more than a piece of property. She was convinced that God intended her to be free.

From the time she was a child Tubman was subject to deep trances in which she heard the voice of the Lord. In one of these experiences in 1849 she perceived that the time for her escape had come. Traveling by night, following the North Star, she passed through swamps and forests until she crossed into the free state of Pennsylvania. She looked at her hands “to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything and I felt like I was in heaven.” But she perceived a wider mission. She could not be truly free while others remained in bondage. And so over the next twelve years she made nineteen perilous trips to “Pharaoh’s Land,” rescuing at least three hundred slaves, including her parents. Each time she risked death. Despised by the slave owners, she was known among the slaves as “Moses.”

After the Civil War she retired to a house in Auburn, New York, supporting herself by selling vegetables from her garden. In 1869 a white admirer published a biography as a means of earning her some money. But accustomed to poverty, she dispersed her income to those in greater need. She lived to her nineties and died on March 10, 1913.

*“I said to de Lord, ‘I’m goin’ to hold steady on to you, an’ I know you’ll see me through.’”*

—Harriet Tubman

# Mass

*Tuesday of the Second Week of Lent*

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 13 (12):4-5

Give light to my eyes lest I fall asleep in death, / lest my enemy say: I have overcome him.

## COLLECT

Guard your Church, we pray, O Lord, in your unceasing mercy,

and, since without you mortal humanity is sure to fall, may we be kept by your constant helps from all harm and directed to all that brings salvation.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 1:10, 16-20

*Learn to do good; make justice your aim.*

**H**ear the word of the LORD, / princes of Sodom! / Listen to the instruction of our God, / people of Gomorrah!

Wash yourselves clean! / Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; / cease doing evil; learn to do good. / Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, / hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.

Come now, let us set things right, / says the LORD: / Though your sins be like scarlet, / they may become white as snow; / Though they be crimson red, / they may become white as wool. / If you are willing, and obey, / you shall eat the good things of the land; / But if you refuse and resist, / the sword shall consume you: / for the mouth of the LORD has spoken!

The word of the Lord.



RESPONSORIAL PSALM

50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23

**R.** (23b) **To the upright I will show the saving power of God.**

“Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you,  
for your burnt offerings are before me always.  
I take from your house no bullock,  
no goats out of your fold.” **R.**

“Why do you recite my statutes,  
and profess my covenant with your mouth,  
Though you hate discipline  
and cast my words behind you?” **R.**

“When you do these things, shall I be deaf to it?  
Or do you think that I am like yourself?  
I will correct you by drawing them up before your eyes.  
He that offers praise as a sacrifice glorifies me;  
and to him that goes the right way I will show the  
salvation of God.” **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ezekiel 18:31

Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed,  
says the LORD,  
and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

23:1-12

*They preach but they do not practice.*

**J**esus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying,  
“The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on  
the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things  
whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example.  
For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy  
burdens hard to carry and lay them on people’s shoulders,

but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased to work your sanctification within us  
by means of these mysteries, O Lord,  
and by it may we be cleansed of earthly faults  
and led to the gifts of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Psalm 9:2-3*

I will recount all your wonders. / I will rejoice in you and  
be glad, / and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the refreshment of this sacred table,  
O Lord, we pray,  
bring us an increase in devoutness of life  
and the constant help of your work of conciliation.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Lessons of the Master

Christ is called master, or teacher, by right of nature rather than by courtesy, for all things subsist through him. Through his incarnation and life upon earth we are taught the way to eternal life. Our reconciliation with God is dependent on the fact of his being greater than we are. Yet, having told his disciples not to allow themselves to be called master, or to love seats of honour and things of that kind, he himself set an example and was a model of humility. It is as though he said: Even as *I do not seek my own glory (though there is One who seeks it)* [John 8:50], so neither must you love to be honoured above others, or to be called master. Look at me: *The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life for many* [Matt 20:28]. . . .

Those who canvass for positions of honour are the ones who exalt themselves; those who delight in serving and caring for others are the ones who humble themselves so as to be exalted by God. Note that it is not those whom the Lord exalts who will be humbled, but those who exalt themselves, and similarly it is those who of their own accord humble themselves who will be exalted by the Lord. . . .

Anyone therefore who wants to be Christ's disciple must hasten to learn the lesson he professes to teach, for a perfect disciple will be like his master. Otherwise, to learn the master's lesson, far from being a master himself, he will not even be a disciple.

St. Paschasius Radbertus, *Commentary on Matthew*

*St. Paschasius Radbertus (ca. 785–ca. 860) was, for a brief time, abbot of Corbie Abbey in France. While he always refused to be raised to the priesthood, he is noted for playing an important role in establishing Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 119:89-96

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Forever is your word, O LORD,  
standing firm in the heavens.  
From age to age is your truth;  
like the earth, it stands firm.

Your judgments endure to this day,  
for all things are your servants.  
Had your law not been my delight,  
I would have died in my affliction.

I will never forget your precepts,  
for with them you give me life.  
Save me, I am yours,  
for I seek your precepts.

Though the wicked lie in wait to destroy me,  
yet I ponder your decrees.  
I have seen that all perfection has an end,  
but your command is boundless.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

1 John 3:17-20, 23

If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

[Now] this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts before him in whatever our hearts condemn, for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The greatest among you must be your servant.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of the covenant, in Jesus you show us your salvation. Secure in your faithful love, we pray: **R7**. Show us your saving power, O God.

Restore life in those who suffer from burnout, exhaustion, or loss of esteem. **R7**.

Help us to hear beyond political or religious differences. **R7**.

Uphold efforts to envision and embody peace, education, and justice for all people. **R7**.

Our Father . . .

May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday, March 11

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 59:2-6, 17-18

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Rescue me, God, from my foes;  
protect me from those who attack me.  
O rescue me from those who do evil,  
and save me from those who are bloodthirsty.

See, they lie in wait for my life;  
the strong band together against me.  
For no offense, no sin of mine, O LORD,  
for no guilt of mine they rush to take their stand.

Awake! Come to meet me, and see!  
LORD God of hosts, you are Israel's God.  
Rouse yourself and punish the nations;  
show no mercy to evil traitors.

As for me, I will sing of your strength,  
and acclaim your faithful love in the morning,  
for you have been my stronghold,  
a refuge in the day of my distress.

O my Strength, to you I will sing praise,  
for you, O God, are my stronghold,  
the God who shows me faithful love.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 38:4-6

**T**he princes said to the king, "This man ought to be put to death. He is weakening the resolve of the soldiers

left in this city and of all the people, by saying such things to them; he is not seeking the welfare of our people, but their ruin.” King Zedekiah answered: “He is in your hands,” for the king could do nothing with them. And so they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Prince Malchiah, in the court of the guard, letting him down by rope. There was no water in the cistern, only mud, and Jeremiah sank down into the mud.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

Must good be repaid with evil, that they should dig a pit to take my life?

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Saving God, you commission your Church to make known to all your majestic name. In faith we pray:

**R.** Guide us, O God.

Help us to repent of false ways and to walk always by the light of your truth. **R.**

Inspire all who proclaim, preach, study, and teach your life-giving word. **R.**

Show your lovingkindness to those who mourn the death of a loved one. **R.**

**Our Father . . .**

May the God of lasting love save us, answer our prayer, and bring us together to everlasting life. Amen.

## *Blessed Among Us*

### **St. Teresa Margaret Redi**

Carmelite (1747–1770)

St. Teresa Margaret Redi, who lived six short years in the Carmelite convent of Florence before her death at twenty-two, has been compared to the later, and better-known St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Born to a noble family in Tuscany, Teresa was educated in a convent in Florence before determining that she was called to the Carmelites. Though her father tried desperately to dissuade her, he eventually relented, convinced of the genuineness of her vocation.

As a novice Teresa eagerly embraced the ascetic discipline of the rule—while comprehending that God desired love and not merely outward obedience. For the sake of love, she was willing to exceed anything required of her. As she wrote, “Nothing will seem difficult when we realize that the loved one wants only love for love. He has given himself completely to us; let us give him our whole heart and we shall live in joy.”

After taking her vows, Sr. Teresa served as infirmarian—delighting in the opportunity to care for her ailing sisters, even when, unbeknownst to them, she had her own private sufferings. On Pentecost 1767 she was struck deeply by the verse, “God is love.” Afterward, in every action, every form of service, every act of devotion, she endeavored to return God’s love. The power of this intention took a toll. After a sudden illness, she died of peritonitis on March 7, 1770. She was canonized in 1934.

*“Love does not want a divided heart; he wants all or nothing.”*

—St. Teresa Margaret Redi



# Mass

*Wednesday of the Second Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 38 (37):22-23

Forsake me not, O Lord! My God, be not far from me! /  
Make haste and come to my help, O Lord, my strong  
salvation!

COLLECT

Keep your family, O Lord,  
schooled always in good works,  
and so comfort them with your protection here  
as to lead them graciously to gifts on high.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 18:18-20

*Come, let us persecute him.*

**T**he people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem said,  
“Come, let us contrive a plot against Jeremiah. It will  
not mean the loss of instruction from the priests, nor of  
counsel from the wise, nor of messages from the prophets.  
And so, let us destroy him by his own tongue; let us carefully  
note his every word.”

Heed me, O LORD, / and listen to what my adversaries say.  
/ Must good be repaid with evil / that they should dig a pit  
to take my life? / Remember that I stood before you / to  
speak in their behalf, / to turn away your wrath from them.  
The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

31:5-6, 14, 15-16

**R.** (17b) Save me, O Lord, in your kindness.

You will free me from the snare they set for me,  
for you are my refuge.

Into your hands I commend my spirit;  
you will redeem me, O LORD, O faithful God. **R.**

I hear the whispers of the crowd, that frighten me from  
every side,  
as they consult together against me, plotting to take  
my life. **R.**

But my trust is in you, O LORD;

I say, "You are my God."

In your hands is my destiny; rescue me  
from the clutches of my enemies and my persecutors. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 8:12

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;  
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

20:17-28

*They will condemn the Son of Man to death.*

**A**s Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the Twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached Jesus with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something. He said to her, "What do you wish?" She an-

swered him, "Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus said in reply, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the chalice that I am going to drink?" They said to him, "We can." He replied, "My chalice you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right and at my left, this is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favor, Lord,  
on the sacrificial gifts we offer you,  
and by this holy exchange  
undo the bonds of our sins.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 20:28

The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, /  
and to give his life as a ransom for many.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, O Lord our God,  
that what you have given us as the pledge of immortality  
may work for our eternal salvation.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Not as the World Would

If you have ever been bullied or teased, or if someone has ever tried to manipulate you into doing something, today's readings might seem familiar territory. Both Jeremiah and Jesus provide sound advice for how to handle these difficult situations—and they set a high bar for responding, not as the world would but as a Christian should.

Jeremiah is fully aware of those intent on persecuting him. While the world might have him fight back or try to get even, Jeremiah instead asks God to intervene, to free him from the trap his adversaries are intending to set.

In the Gospel we meet Zebedee's wife, who is intent on getting Jesus to give her sons, the apostles James and John, positions of honor. Jesus does not chase her away or dismiss her concerns, but he does address the grumblings of the other apostles, and schools all of them in what truly makes one great. Again, we hear the echo that we are not to act as the world does, trying to lord our power and influence over others. Rather, we are to be servants of others as Jesus was.

I was only a young child when I first learned some of these valuable lessons. At the time, my father was the victim of a bully—his boss. Dad would share those difficult situations with my mother at the dinner table and then ask my sister and me to pray for his boss. Although I thought it was an unusual request back then, I now see how wise my father was in that situation. Dad was responding as Jeremiah or Jesus would.

Let us be schooled always in such goodness.

Sr. Julia Upton

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## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 66:1-9

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth;  
O sing to the glory of God's name.  
O render glorious praise.  
Say to God, "How awesome your deeds!

Because of the greatness of your strength,  
your enemies cower before you.  
Before you all the earth shall bow down,  
shall sing to you, sing to your name!"

Come and see the works of God:  
awesome deeds among the children of Adam.  
God turned the sea into dry land;  
they passed through the river on foot.

There did we rejoice in the Lord,  
who rules forever with might,  
whose eyes keep watch on the nations:  
let rebels not exalt themselves.

O peoples, bless our God;  
let our voice of praise resound,  
to the God who gave life to our souls  
and kept our feet from stumbling.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

James 3:13-18

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in the humility that

comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. Wisdom of this kind does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Creating God of miraculous deeds, your glory fills the earth and the heavens. In awe we pray: **R7.** Open our eyes to the wonders of your love, O God.

You give life to our souls: lift the spirits of those who suffer from depression. **R7.**

You keep our feet from stumbling: give us courage to live the Gospel in spite of hardships. **R7.**

You reconcile us to yourself through Christ: grant eternal life to those who have died in the hope of the resurrection. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God look upon us with love and bless the work of our minds and hands, through Jesus, our liberator from death. Amen.

Thursday, March 12

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 9:2-9

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart;  
all your wonders I will recount.  
I will rejoice in you and be glad,  
and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

See how my enemies turn back,  
how they stumble and perish before you.  
You upheld the justice of my cause;  
you sat enthroned, judging with righteousness.

You have rebuked the nations, destroyed the wicked;  
you have wiped out their name forever and ever.  
The foe is destroyed, eternally ruined.  
You uprooted their cities; their memory has perished.

But the LORD sits enthroned forever,  
and has set up a throne for judgment.  
God will judge the world with righteousness,  
and will govern the peoples with equity.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 3:5-12

**T**rust in the LORD with all your heart, / on your own  
intelligence do not rely; / In all your ways be mindful  
of him, / and he will make straight your paths. / Do not be  
wise in your own eyes, / fear the LORD and turn away from

evil; / This will mean health for your flesh / and vigor for your bones. / Honor the LORD with your wealth, / with first fruits of all your produce; / Then will your barns be filled with plenty, / with new wine your vats will overflow. / The discipline of the LORD, my son, do not spurn; / do not disdain his reproof; / For whom the LORD loves he reproveth, / as a father, the son he favors.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Happy are those who trust in the Lord.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Gracious God, you bless those who keep your word with a generous heart. In hope we pray: **R7.** God, touch our hearts by your love.

Inspire your Church to greater concern and care for the poor and immigrants, youth and the elderly. **R7.**

Counsel Pope Francis, bishops, and Church leaders by the light of your word and the grace of your Spirit. **R7.**

Help us to heed the warning signs of environmental changes. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with peace and sustain us to the end so that we may be holy and blameless in the sight of Jesus Christ. Amen.



## Blessed Among Us

### St. Symeon the New Theologian

Abbot (949–1022)

St. Symeon was an important figure in the spiritual renewal of Byzantine monasticism. Though he spent his early years in what he later termed “a dissipated life,” he underwent a conversion after reading the *Lives of the Saints*. From then on, “wounded by love and desire for the Lord, he sought the supreme Beauty.” At the age of twenty-seven he joined the monastery of Studium and became the close disciple of its spiritual leader, a renowned monk named Symeon the Devout, whom he eventually succeeded (and from whom he acquired his own monastic name).

St. Symeon did not take easily to the role of leader. He had a tendency to stir up controversy and often displayed sarcasm in dealing with opponents. Not all the monks responded to his austere regime or to his exhortations to mystical union with God. At one point a faction of the community staged an uprising and tried unsuccessfully to have him expelled. Eventually, he was exiled by the Patriarch of Constantinople to an oratory on the shore of the Bosphorus. There he built a monastery and devoted his final years to composing hymns of praise to God. It was for his ardent prayer, and not his academic learning, that he was dubbed “the New Theologian.” He died on March 12, 1022.

*“Our holy fathers have renounced all other spiritual work and concentrated wholly on this one doing, that is, on guarding the heart, convinced that, through this practice, they would easily attain every other virtue, whereas without it not a single virtue can be firmly established.”*

—St. Symeon the New Theologian

## Mass

*Thursday of the Second Week of Lent*

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 139 (138):23-24

Test me, O God, and know my thoughts. / See that my path is not wicked, / and lead me in the way everlasting.

### COLLECT

O God, who delight in innocence and restore it,  
direct the hearts of your servants to yourself,  
that, caught up in the fire of your Spirit,  
we may be found steadfast in faith  
and effective in works.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 17:5-10

*A curse on those who trust in mortals;  
a blessing on those who trust in the Lord God.*

**T**hus says the LORD: / Cursed is the man who trusts in human beings, / who seeks his strength in flesh, / whose heart turns away from the LORD. / He is like a barren bush in the desert / that enjoys no change of season, / But stands in a lava waste, / a salt and empty earth. / Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, / whose hope is the LORD. / He is like a tree planted beside the waters / that stretches out its roots to the stream: / It fears not the heat when it comes, / its leaves stay green; / In the year of drought it shows no distress, / but still bears fruit. / More tortuous than all else is the human heart, / beyond remedy; who can understand it? / I, the LORD, alone probe the mind / and

test the heart, / To reward everyone according to his ways,  
/ according to the merit of his deeds.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6

**R7.** (40:5a) Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

Blessed the man who follows not  
the counsel of the wicked  
Nor walks in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the company of the insolent,  
But delights in the law of the LORD  
and meditates on his law day and night. **R7.**

He is like a tree  
planted near running water,  
That yields its fruit in due season,  
and whose leaves never fade.  
Whatever he does, prospers. **R7.**

Not so, the wicked, not so;  
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.  
For the LORD watches over the way of the just,  
but the way of the wicked vanishes. **R7.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

See Luke 8:15

Blessed are they who have kept the word with a generous  
heart / and yield a harvest through perseverance.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 16:19-31

*Good things came to you and bad things to Lazarus;  
now he is comforted while you are in agony.*

**J**esus said to the Pharisees: “There was a rich man who  
dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined  
sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor

man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.' Abraham replied, 'My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.' He said, 'Then I beg you, father, send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.' But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.' He said, 'Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' Then Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

By this present sacrifice, we pray, O Lord,  
sanctify our observance,  
that what Lenten discipline outwardly declares  
it may inwardly bring about.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Psalm 119 (118):1

Blessed are those whose way is blameless, / who walk in  
the law of the Lord.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this sacrifice, O God,  
remain active in its effects  
and work ever more strongly within us.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

**“I had no idea . . .”**

I cannot tell you how many times I have heard these words, whether from family members, parishioners, or students—and how many more times I have uttered the words in humble gratitude myself.

*I had no idea the semester would go by so quickly,* pleads the college freshman, begging for an extension for a paper already overdue, the final exam looming.

*I had no idea how many people are struggling in our town,* whispers the parishioner at the end of her first night volunteering at the local soup kitchen.

*I had no idea all you put into this,* I say to my wife again and again and again, amazed by her constant graciousness in all she does for our family.

*I had no idea,* says the rich man in today’s Gospel . . . a little too late.

The rich man’s “sin” is not being rich; being among the “one percent” is not evil in itself. He is condemned for pursuing a lavish lifestyle—the best of clothing and sumptuous

dining—that blinds him to the plight of poor Lazarus at his gate. The rich man suffers from a more debilitating poverty of spirit, an emptiness of purpose that he realizes only when he faces Abraham.

Is it a lack of awareness on the rich man's part . . . or simply not *wanting* to see?

Who are the Lazaruses we trip over at our own gates: The ones who cry out for a scrap of bread from our table? The ones who seek some affirmation that they matter, that their lives mean something? The ones who pray for their brokenness to be healed, for help in finding their way back, for a simple cup of water to satisfy their thirst for recognition and affirmation?

Get the idea?

Jay Cormier

*Jay Cormier, a deacon serving in the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire, is author of The Deacon's Ministry of the Word (Liturgical Press) and editor and publisher of Connections.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 132:1-10

O LORD, remember David  
and all the hardships he endured,  
the oath he swore to the LORD,  
his vow to the Strong One of Jacob.

“I will not enter the house where I dwell,  
nor go to the bed where I rest;  
I will give no sleep to my eyes,  
to my eyelids I will give no slumber,  
till I find a place for the LORD,  
a dwelling for the Strong One of Jacob.”

We heard of it at Ephrata;  
we found it in the plains of Yearim.  
“Let us go to the place of God’s dwelling;  
let us bow down at God’s footstool.”

Go up, LORD, to the place of your rest,  
you and the ark of your strength.  
Your priests shall be clothed with righteousness;  
your faithful shall ring out their joy.  
For the sake of David your servant,  
do not reject your anointed.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 12:12, 24b-27

**A**s a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.

God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.

Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

If one member of Christ's body suffers, all the members suffer.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Patient and ever-living God, you grasp us by your love and shape us anew in Jesus Christ. In trust we pray:

**R7.** Fill us with the breath of your Spirit, O God.

Endow our religious and civil leaders with righteousness, compassion, and justice. **R7.**

Guide Church leaders in their efforts to nourish parishioners with catechesis and ongoing faith formation. **R7.**

Give peace to those whose earthly pilgrimage is nearing an end. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God open our hearts to receive Jesus with trust, gratitude, and zeal for the service of the Gospel. Amen.



Friday, March 13

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 90:1-4, 14-17

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O Lord, you have been our refuge,  
from generation to generation.  
Before the mountains were born,  
or the earth or the world were brought forth,  
you are God, from age to age.

You turn human beings back to dust,  
and say, "Return, O children of Adam."  
To your eyes a thousand years  
are like yesterday, come and gone,  
or like a watch in the night.

At dawn, fill us with your faithful love;  
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.  
Give us joy for the days of our affliction,  
for the years when we looked upon evil.

Let your deed be seen by your servants,  
and your glorious power by their children.  
Let the favor of the LORD our God be upon us;  
give success to the work of our hands.  
O give success to the work of our hands.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 4:8-10

**C**ain said to his brother Abel, “Let us go out in the field.” When they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD asked Cain, Where is your brother Abel? He answered, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” God then said: What have you done? Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground!

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

We are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Faithful God, you remember your word spoken to Abraham and continue your blessing upon us. In faith we pray: **R**. Let us find our joy in you, O God.

Help us to remember the marvels you have worked in us and in our world, and give us grateful hearts. **R**.

Inspire us to pause from busyness, and open our senses to the wonders that surround us. **R**.

Grant holy perseverance to catechumens and all who seek full communion in the Church. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God favor us with the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding and enrich our lives with every blessing of the Spirit. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Blessed Agnellus of Pisa

Franciscan (1195–1236)

Agnellus, the son of a wealthy family in Pisa, was personally recruited by St. Francis to join his order. In quick succession he was entrusted with two significant missions: first, to establish a house in Paris, and then to lead the first Franciscan province in England. His commission, from the hand of Francis himself, was simple: “By the merit of wholesome obedience, I command thee to go to England and there to exercise the office of Minister Provincial. Farewell.”

In 1224 Agnellus and a small band of friars set out for Dover. They arrived without any funds. Nevertheless, their reputation having preceded them, they were warmly welcomed in Canterbury. In light of their faithfulness to the Gospel, the archbishop dubbed them affectionally “the Order of the Apostles.” From there they advanced to London and then to Cambridge and Oxford. Though Agnellus was not a learned man, he respected study, and through these houses the English province would produce some of the great scholars of the age: John Duns Scotus, Roger Bacon, and Robert Grosseteste.

Agnellus was zealous in guarding the spirit of poverty. It was said that “he would never permit any ground to be enlarged or any house to be built except as inevitable necessity required.” In designing an infirmary in Oxford, he decreed that the ceiling should be no higher than a man’s height—though unfortunately this did not leave provision for any man taller than himself. Nevertheless, under his leadership the English province quickly spread and established deep roots. Agnellus died of dysentery in 1236. His feast is March 13.

“Come, sweetest Jesus.” —Last words of Blessed Agnellus of Pisa

# Mass

*Friday of the Second Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 31 (30):2, 5

In you, O Lord, I put my trust, let me never be put to shame; / release me from the snare they have hidden for me, / for you indeed are my refuge.

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that, purifying us by the sacred practice of penance,  
you may lead us in sincerity of heart  
to attain the holy things to come.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a

*Here comes the man of dreams; let us kill him.*

Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him a long tunic. When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his sons, they hated him so much that they would not even greet him.

One day, when his brothers had gone to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem, Israel said to Joseph, "Your brothers, you know, are tending our flocks at Shechem. Get ready; I will send you to them."

So Joseph went after his brothers and caught up with them in Dothan. They noticed him from a distance, and before he came up to them, they plotted to kill him. They said to one another: "Here comes that master dreamer! Come on, let us kill him and throw him into one of the

cisterns here; we could say that a wild beast devoured him. We shall then see what comes of his dreams.”

When Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from their hands, saying, “We must not take his life. Instead of shedding blood,” he continued, “just throw him into that cistern there in the desert; but do not kill him outright.” His purpose was to rescue him from their hands and return him to his father. So when Joseph came up to them, they stripped him of the long tunic he had on; then they took him and threw him into the cistern, which was empty and dry.

They then sat down to their meal. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels laden with gum, balm and resin to be taken down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers: “What is to be gained by killing our brother and concealing his blood? Rather, let us sell him to these Ishmaelites, instead of doing away with him ourselves. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh.” His brothers agreed. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21

**R7.** (5a) Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

When the LORD called down a famine on the land  
and ruined the crop that sustained them,  
He sent a man before them,  
Joseph, sold as a slave. **R7.**

They had weighed him down with fetters,  
and he was bound with chains,  
Till his prediction came to pass  
and the word of the LORD proved him true. **R7.**

The king sent and released him,  
the ruler of the peoples set him free.  
He made him lord of his house  
and ruler of all his possessions. **R7.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**John 3:16**

God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son;  
so that everyone who believes in him might have  
eternal life.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

**21:33-43, 45-46**

*This is the heir; let us kill him.*

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: “Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’ They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?” They answered him, “He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.” Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures: / *The stone that the builders rejected / has become the cornerstone; / by the Lord has this been done, / and it is*

*wonderful in our eyes?* / Therefore, I say to you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit.” When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was speaking about them. And although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May your merciful grace prepare your servants, O God, for the worthy celebration of these mysteries, and lead them to it by a devout way of life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

1 John 4:10

God loved us, and sent his Son / as expiation for our sins.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal salvation, we pray, O Lord, that we may set our course so well as to attain the redemption you promise.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### We Are Family

If you are a parent, you know that you are sometimes the last to see clearly what is going on with your children. Today's

readings offer two age-old but timely stories that weave a father's tragic miscalculation together with greed and murder.

If you have more than one child, you understand the folly of loving, or even preferring, one of your children over the others. Israel, the father of Joseph, commits this imprudence. Joseph's siblings chafe at their father's favoritism, to the point where they loathe their youngest brother, whom they mock as the "master dreamer." The bitterness among brothers festers. They stop short of murder; instead, they take money for Joseph and dispatch him to a life of slavery. Israel is left to mourn his favorite.

The father in the Gospel of Matthew fails to fathom the deep resentment his tenants hold against his family. "They will respect my son," he assumes, but they do not. The greedy tenants kill the man's beloved son to gain his inheritance. The deaths of the wretched murderers do not bring the grieving man's son back. Nothing can.

Jesus' heartbreaking parable foretells his own fate. We too will sell our brother for pieces of silver. We too will kill our father's favored son. The miracle is that Jesus will rise from death. Our brother, our master dreamer, will return to redeem us. As Jesus assures us, "*By the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes.*"

Valerie Schultz

*Valerie Schultz is a freelance writer and award-winning essayist. She is author of the recently released book Overdue: A Dewey Decimal System of Grace (Liturgical Press).*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 102:2-3, 24-29

Hear my prayer, O LORD,  
and let my cry come to you.  
Do not hide your face from me  
in the day of my distress.  
Turn your ear towards me;  
on the day when I call,  
speedily answer me.

The Lord has broken my strength in midcourse,  
and has shortened my days.

I say: “My God, do not take me away  
before half of my days are complete,  
you, whose days last from age to age.

Long ago you founded the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands.  
They will perish but you will remain.  
They will all wear out like a garment.  
You will change them like clothes, and they change.  
But you are the same, and your years do not end.”

The children of your servants shall dwell untroubled,  
and their descendants established before you.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Acts 7:9-15a

**T**he patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into slavery in Egypt; but God was with him and rescued him from all his afflictions. He granted him favor and wisdom before

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, who put him in charge of Egypt and [of] his entire household. Then a famine and great affliction struck all Egypt and Canaan, and our ancestors could find no food; but when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there a first time. The second time, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. Then Joseph sent for his father Jacob, inviting him and his whole clan, seventy-five persons; and Jacob went down to Egypt."

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

God sent Joseph ahead of Israel to save them from destruction.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of our ancestors, your love is everlasting. We place our trust in you and pray: **R**. Give us your Spirit, O God.

Widen our circle of inclusion, and help us to be hospitable to the immigrant, newcomer, and lonely. **R**.

Inspire teachers to offer education that is meaningful, relevant, and accessible. **R**.

Grant peace to the dying and strength to those who wait with them. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God strengthen us with every gift of the Spirit so that we may live the Gospel and spread the good news with joy. Amen.

Saturday, March 14

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 50:1-2, 7-9, 14-15

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

The God of gods, the LORD,  
has spoken and summoned the earth,  
from the rising of the sun to its setting.  
Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,  
God is shining forth.

“Listen, my people, I will speak;  
Israel, I will testify against you,  
for I am God, your God.

“I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices;  
your offerings are always before me.  
I do not take more bullocks from your farms,  
nor goats from among your herds.

“Give your praise as a sacrifice to God,  
and fulfill your vows to the Most High.  
Then call on me in the day of distress.  
I will deliver you and you shall honor me.”

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found, / call upon him  
while he is near. / Let the wicked forsake their way, /  
and sinners their thoughts; / Let them turn to the LORD to  
find mercy; / to our God, who is generous in forgiving. /

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, / nor are your ways  
my ways—oracle of the LORD. / For as the heavens are higher  
than the earth, / so are my ways higher than your ways, /  
my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or  
another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

### ANTIPHON

Who is there like you, the God who removes guilt and  
pardons sin?

### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

### INTERCESSIONS

Forgiving God, you heal all our ills and crown us with  
mercy. In faith we pray: **R<sup>7</sup>**. God, in your compassion,  
hear our prayer.

Heal the woundedness of our hearts, and let us be the  
face of your forgiveness and love. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Inspire missionaries, and relieve the suffering of those  
who are persecuted for their faith. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Prosper efforts to ensure that all people have access to  
clean water sources, means of communication, and  
adequate health care. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Our Father . . .

May God be gracious to us, show us favor, and fill our  
hearts with peace, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Maximilian

Martyr (d. 295)

St. Maximilian, a third-century martyr in North Africa, was killed for refusing to serve in the Roman army. He was twenty-one when he was brought before the court of the Roman proconsul and charged with refusing conscription. Maximilian explained: “I cannot enlist for I am a Christian. I cannot serve, I cannot do evil.” When told that he must serve or die, Maximilian replied, “I will never serve. You can cut off my head but I will not be a soldier of this world, for I am a soldier of Christ.” Asked who had put such wild ideas in his head, Maximilian answered, “My conscience and He who has called me.” When the proconsul warned that in punishment for this disobedience he could be “sent to your Christ at once,” Maximilian said that he could ask for nothing better: “Do it quickly, for there is my glory.”

In worshiping Christ, Maximilian was charged not only with disobeying his military office but with impiety—disrespect for the gods of Rome. His sentence read: “Maximilian has refused the military oath through impiety.” After hearing that he was to be beheaded, Maximilian cried out: “God liveth.”

The sentence was carried out immediately.

*“My army is the army of God, and I cannot fight for this world.”*

—St. Maximilian

# Mass

*Saturday of the Second Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 145 (144):8-9

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger,  
abounding in mercy. / How good is the Lord to all,  
compassionate to all his creatures.

COLLECT

O God, who grant us by glorious healing remedies while  
still on earth  
to be partakers of the things of heaven,  
guide us, we pray, through this present life  
and bring us to that light in which you dwell.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Micah

7:14-15, 18-20

*God will cast our sins into the depths of the sea.*

Shepherd your people with your staff, / the flock of your  
inheritance, / That dwells apart in a woodland, / in the  
midst of Carmel. / Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, /  
as in the days of old; / As in the days when you came from  
the land of Egypt, / show us wonderful signs.

Who is there like you, the God who removes guilt / and  
pardons sin for the remnant of his inheritance; / Who does  
not persist in anger forever, / but delights rather in clem-  
ency, / And will again have compassion on us, / treading  
underfoot our guilt? / You will cast into the depths of the  
sea all our sins; / You will show faithfulness to Jacob, / and

grace to Abraham, / As you have sworn to our fathers / from days of old.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

**R<sup>7</sup>.** (8a) The Lord is kind and merciful.

Bless the LORD, O my soul;  
and all my being, bless his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

He pardons all your iniquities,  
he heals all your ills.

He redeems your life from destruction,  
he crowns you with kindness and compassion. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

He will not always chide,  
nor does he keep his wrath forever.

Not according to our sins does he deal with us,  
nor does he requite us according to our crimes. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he put our transgressions from us. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 15:18

I will get up and go to my father and shall say to him,  
Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

15:1-3, 11-32

*Your brother was dead and has come to life.*

**T**ax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to

complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So to them Jesus addressed this parable. “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’ So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly, bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has



slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Through these sacred gifts, we pray, O Lord,  
may our redemption yield its fruits,  
restraining us from unruly desires  
and leading us onward to the gifts of salvation.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Luke 15:32**

You must rejoice, my son, / for your brother was dead  
and has come to life; / he was lost and is found.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May your divine Sacrament, O Lord, which we have  
received,  
fill the inner depths of our heart  
and, by its working mightily within us,  
make us partakers of its grace.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Mercifully Welcomed

Hide yourself under the wings of God's mercy, for he is more ready to pardon than you are to sin. Immerse yourself in the blood of Christ, where your soul will grow fat on hope.

*Oh gentlest love! How well this mercy suits you!*

Take a good look! What kept God from ordering the earth to swallow us up and the animals to devour us after our first fall? Instead he lent us time and waited patiently for us. What explains our having received such favor? Our non-existent virtues? No! Only God's infinite mercy! So now that he is treating us so mercifully when we are lying in the darkness of deadly sin, we should be so much more hopeful in lively confidence that he will do the same if we acknowledge our sins and return to the ark, to the yoke of obedience. There let us trample underfoot and kill our selfish will and sleep no longer.

Take on once again the yoke of obedience and the key of Christ's blood which you have thrown into the deep well. Take [them] up again with heartfelt contrition, with contempt for the sin you have committed and with lively faith. Gaze into supreme eternal Truth, and take hold of the firm confidence that God will mercifully welcome you and pardon you the sin you have committed. And the eternal Father will come to meet you with the overflowing fullness of his grace.

St. Catherine of Siena, adapted from *The Letters of Catherine of Siena*

*Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) was a mystic and a tertiary of the Dominican Order. She is a Doctor of the Church.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 48:2-4, 9-11

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Great is the LORD and highly to be praised  
in the city of our God,  
whose holy mountain rises in beauty,  
the joy of all the earth.

Mount Zion, in the heart of the North,  
the city of the Mighty King!  
God, in the midst of her citadels,  
is shown to be her stronghold.

As we have heard, so we have seen  
in the city of our God,  
in the city of the LORD of hosts,  
which God establishes forever.

Your faithful love, O God,  
we ponder in your temple.  
Your praise, O God, like your name,  
reaches the ends of the earth.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:1-2a, 4-7

**Y**ou were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you once lived following the age of this world. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ (by grace you have been saved), raised us up with him, and seated us with him in

the heavens in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of our praise, your greatness extends beyond the farthest star. In hope we pray: **R7**. Show us your mercy, O God.

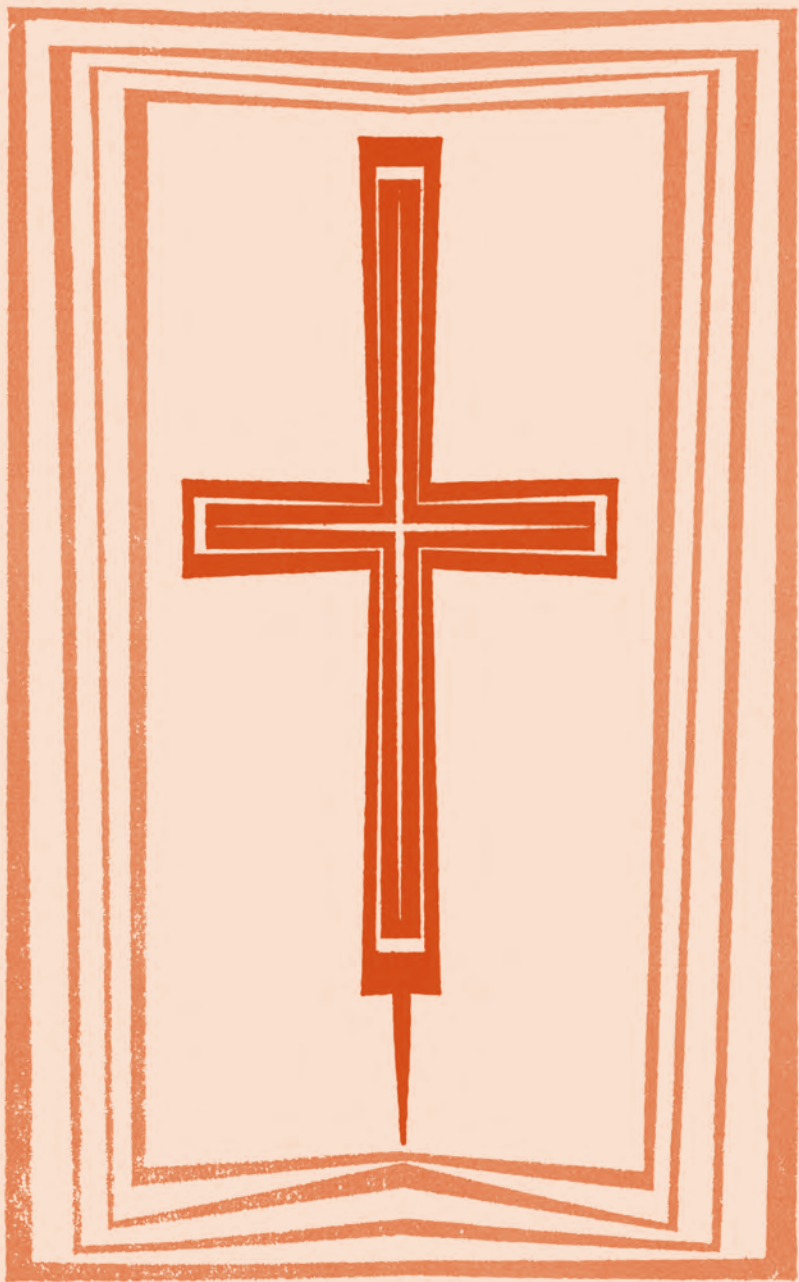
Strengthen your Church's prophetic mission to proclaim the Gospel and extend compassion and forgiveness in Jesus' name. **R7**.

Give justice to refugees, immigrants, and migrants. **R7**.

Heal families separated by war, incarceration, or immigration policies. **R7**.

Our Father . . .

May God bless us, be gracious to us, and give us peace.  
Amen.





Sunday, March 15

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 118:24-29

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

This is the day the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice in it and be glad.

We beseech you, O LORD, grant salvation;  
We beseech you, O LORD, grant success.  
Blest is he who comes  
in the name of the LORD.

We bless you from the house of the LORD;  
the LORD is God, and has given us light.

Go forward in procession with branches,  
as far as the horns of the altar.

You are my God, I thank you.

My God, I praise you.

Give thanks to the LORD, who is good,  
whose faithful love endures forever.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Sirach 24:19-23

Come to me, all who desire me, / and be filled with my  
fruits. / You will remember me as sweeter than honey,  
/ better to have than the honeycomb. / Those who eat of me  
will hunger still, / those who drink of me will thirst for

more. / Whoever obeys me will not be put to shame, / and those who serve me will never go astray.”

All this is the book of the covenant of the Most High God, / the Law which Moses commanded us / as a heritage for the community of Jacob.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

### ANTIPHON

The water I shall give will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

### INTERCESSIONS

Gracious God, in Jesus you extended friendship and new life to the Samaritan woman. Create in us a new spirit as we pray: **R7.** Let us see your kindness, O God.

Give joy to all who gather for worship, and help us to extend love to those who are homebound, alone, or alienated from the Church. **R7.**

Favor Pope Francis with health, wisdom, and holy perseverance as he guides your Church to build relationships of love and justice. **R7.**

Inspire creativity in catechists, homilists, and youth ministers. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May the Spirit of God animate our hearts to receive God's love, to see Christ in others, and to seek the good of our brothers and sisters in need. Amen.



# Mass

## Third Sunday of Lent

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 25 (24):15-16

My eyes are always on the Lord, / for he rescues my feet  
from the snare. / Turn to me and have mercy on me, / for  
I am alone and poor.

### Or:

Cf. Ezekiel 36:23-26

When I prove my holiness among you, / I will gather you  
from all the foreign lands; / and I will pour clean water  
upon you / and cleanse you from all your impurities, /  
and I will give you a new spirit, says the Lord.

(The Gloria is omitted.)

### COLLECT

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,  
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving  
have shown us a remedy for sin,  
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,  
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,  
may always be lifted up by your mercy.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the Book of Exodus

17:3-7

*Give us water, so that we may drink.*

In those days, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and our livestock?” So Moses cried out

to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? A little more and they will stone me!" The LORD answered Moses, "Go over there in front of the people, along with some of the elders of Israel, holding in your hand, as you go, the staff with which you struck the river. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock in Horeb. Strike the rock, and the water will flow from it for the people to drink." This Moses did, in the presence of the elders of Israel. The place was called Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled there and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD in our midst or not?"

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

**R7.** (8) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him. **R7.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he  
guides. **R7.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as in the day of Massah in the desert,  
where your fathers tempted me;  
they tested me though they had seen my works." **R7.**

## A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

5:1-2, 5-8

*The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*

**B**rothers and sisters: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Cf. John 4:42, 15*

Lord, you are truly the Savior of the world;  
give me living water, that I may never thirst again.

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

4:5-42 (Shorter Form [ ], 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42)

*The water that I shall give will become a spring of eternal life.*

**[J]**esus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can

you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?”—For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.—Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?” Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”]

Jesus said to her, “Go call your husband and come back.” The woman answered and said to him, “I do not have a husband.” Jesus answered her, “You are right in saying, ‘I do not have a husband.’ For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true.” The woman said to him, “Sir, [I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ;

when he comes, he will tell us everything.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one (who is) speaking with you.”]

At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, “What are you looking for?” or “Why are you talking with her?” The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, “Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?” They went out of the town and came to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” So the disciples said to one another, “Could someone have brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘In four months the harvest will be here?’ I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. The reaper is already receiving payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work.”

[Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him] because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me everything I have done.” [When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.”]

The Gospel of the Lord.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, with these sacrificial offerings,  
and grant that we who beseech pardon for our own sins,  
may take care to forgive our neighbor.

Through Christ our Lord.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

John 4:13-14

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, / the water I  
shall give will become in him / a spring welling up to  
eternal life.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As we receive the pledge  
of things yet hidden in heaven  
and are nourished while still on earth  
with the Bread that comes from on high,  
we humbly entreat you, O Lord,  
that what is being brought about in us in mystery  
may come to true completion.

Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Fountain of Life

The woman at the well models for all disciples what must happen to us again and again: we must be faced with the truth during an encounter with Jesus and the Spirit, confess our sinfulness, come to a fuller awareness of who Jesus is and so who God truly is. Then we must acknowledge who Jesus is and leave our water jar at the well, now that we have the fountain of life leaping up within us, and return to our homes

and confess who we are—sinners and believers in Jesus—and convert our neighbors by telling them the good news of Jesus.

Jesus challenges the disciples and the woman in the same way—opening with a theological statement to make them think. (The woman seems to do much better with Jesus on a theological and wisdom level than the disciples do. They are a bit slow.) With the woman it is water; with the disciples it is food. Jesus' food is his work. Now the woman sets about the same work after meeting Jesus. Jesus wants the disciples to look and see, as the woman has learned to look and see. The fields ripe for the harvest are the work of the Spirit. The disciples are called to reap the firstfruits of the Spirit's labor. The villagers who heard the woman's testimony believe because of her faith and the conversion of her life first, but then they go deeper into Jesus, hearing his words and seeing the truth of his person, and they themselves continue the process of harvesting what has been sown by the Spirit. This is the story of the church community, making new believers by the power of the Spirit, the witness of believers, and the conversion of all to a deeper immersion in the waters of life, baptism. It is about initiation into the life of the Spirit.

..... Megan McKenna, *Lent*

*Megan McKenna is an author, theologian, storyteller, and lecturer. She has taught at a number of schools, including Fordham University and the Washington Theological Union.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 144:9-15

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

To you, O God, will I sing a new song;  
I will play on the ten-stringed harp  
to you who give kings their victory,  
who redeemed your servant David,  
from the evil sword.

Rescue me, free me from the hands of foreign foes,  
whose mouths speak lies,  
whose right hands are raised in perjury.

Let our sons then flourish like saplings,  
grown tall and strong from their youth;  
our daughters graceful as columns,  
as though they were carved for a palace.

Let our barns be filled to overflowing  
with crops of every kind;  
our sheep increasing by thousands,  
tens of thousands in our fields,  
our cattle heavy with young.

No ruined wall, no exile,  
no sound of weeping in our streets.  
Blessed the people of whom this is true;  
blessed the people whose God is the LORD!

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Revelation 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of life-giving water,  
sparkling like crystal, flowing from the throne of God



and of the Lamb down the middle of its street. On either side of the river grew the tree of life that produces fruit twelve times a year, once each month; the leaves of the trees serve as medicine for the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will look upon his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. Night will be no more, nor will they need light from lamp or sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever and ever.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God our Rock, you are the shield in whom we take refuge. Trusting in your merciful love, we pray: **R7.** Save us, O God.

You give victory to your beloved: rescue those who suffer oppression or ill treatment. **R7.**

You train us for battle: strengthen and prosper efforts to defend the human rights of the poor. **R7.**

You give light to our eyes: enkindle gifts of compassion, courage, and faith in your Church. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God give us living water, today and every day, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

March 15–21

Third Week of Lent

## *Within the Word*

### **The Art of Broken Things**

What kind of world do you want to live in? This isn't a parlor game. It's a moral query, maybe even an examination of conscience. We could certainly use a better world. One in which "Peace on earth" isn't just a line in a Christmas card, and "justice for all" means everybody. A history cleansed of hostility would be ideal. Rewinding the climate crisis to subvert the damage would be optimal. But alas: only in a parlor game do we get to erase the past and rewrite the present.

The world is already broken. The cracks are obvious everywhere. If history can't be rebooted and the present pretended away, only the future remains for our thoughtful, fateful consideration. So: how do you mend a broken world?

We might take a lesson from *Kintsugi*, the Japanese art of "golden joinery." You've seen such bowls: chipped or shattered, then repaired with lacquer dusted with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. The sad broken thing becomes useful again, more lovely than before. The veins of precious metal don't deny a fractured past. Rather, they absorb it, and celebrate transformation.

As an art form *Kintsugi* incorporates aspects of Japanese philosophy. It values the flawed, expresses regret for waste, and honors the reality of change. If the sacrament of reconciliation were a concrete object you could hold in your hand, it might look like *Kintsugi*. This could be a good Lenten reflection: to place a mended bit of crockery in the center of your daily meditation. Let it be a reminder of the sharp and

splintered elements of your life that need attention. Because things do get broken: promises, relationships, hearts, people. Yet our trust is in the Lord who gathers up the fragments, that nothing may be wasted. What seems ruined or worthless now might yet be redeemed—if we just hand it over to the artist of divine repair.

Shattered objects can be bound together again using precious metals. What reconciles our interior brokenness is the precious element of forgiveness. Want a society of justice and peace? Begin with forgiveness. Hope to rid the planet of prejudice, greed, poverty? Fill the cracks of every intention and conversation with forgiveness. Need to find a way to live with yourself, after what you've done, or what you failed to do? Let holy forgiveness surround you like light and pour into your soul its grace.

If this seems too simple, remember how God selected forgiveness—not penance, not charity, not heroic deeds—as the vehicle of salvation. Recall how a man who couldn't move from his mat garnered forgiveness from Jesus before all else. And how, from the cross, Jesus looked murder right in the face and chose to forgive. Our every Eucharist is a sacrament for the forgiveness of sin. “Do this in memory of me.” Do *this*.

Peter, wreathed in charitable feeling, once asked if seven episodes of forgiveness were plenty to cover his obligation. Such a constrained largess amuses Jesus, who recommends expanding that number to seventy-seven. The cracking sound that followed was Peter's jaw hitting the ground—along with his sense of righteousness. Never fear: both can be mended. And when we consistently choose forgiveness as the restorative miracle that it is, even the saddest history can become, like the cross, desperately beautiful.

—Alice Camille

*Alice Camille is the co-author with Paul Boudreau of The Forgiveness Book, and other titles available at [www.alicecamille.com](http://www.alicecamille.com).*

Monday, March 16

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 65:6-11

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

With wondrous deliverance you answer us,  
O God our savior.  
You are the hope of all the earth,  
and of far distant seas.

You establish the mountains with your strength;  
you are girded with power.  
You still the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves,  
and the tumult of the peoples.

Distant peoples stand in awe  
at your wondrous deeds.  
The lands of sunrise and sunset  
you fill with your joy.

You visit the earth, give it water;  
you fill it with riches.  
God's ever-flowing river brims over  
to prepare the grain.

And thus it is you who prepare it:  
you drench its furrows;  
you level it, soften it with showers;  
you bless its growth.

Glory to the Father . . .

## SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 36:25-28

will sprinkle clean water over you to make you clean; from all your impurities and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances, and keep them. You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

## ANTIPHON

There is no God in all the earth except the God of Israel.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

## INTERCESSIONS

God our Savior, you are the hope of all the earth. With trust in your loving care, we pray: **R.** Give us a new heart, O God.

You still the tumult of the peoples: help us to speak with reverence and respect to one another. **R.**

You fill the earth with joy: inspire preachers and missionaries to reveal your good news with compassion. **R.**

You bless the land with growth: grant clement weather for the planting and growing of gardens and fields. **R.**

Our Father . . .

May God fashion our hearts into the likeness of Christ and strengthen us with every gift of the spirit, through Jesus our friend. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Louise de Marillac

Cofounder, Daughters of Charity (1591–1660)

Following the death of her father when she was fifteen, Louise de Marillac agreed to marry a wealthy courtier in the household of the French queen. She was a happy wife and mother. But when her husband died she vowed she would devote the rest of her life to the service of God. After some years searching for her vocation, she was introduced to Fr. Vincent de Paul, who became her spiritual director and with whom she went on to form one of the great partnerships in the history of religious life.

Monsieur Vincent, as he was called, was widely known for the extraordinary range of his charitable projects. These included a circle of aristocratic ladies who joined him to work in the Parisian slums among the sick and destitute. Louise committed herself to this work. But soon they formed the notion of a community of women completely committed to loving service among the poor. Thus were born the Daughters of Charity. Rome's recognition of a congregation of women living outside an enclosed convent and engaged in apostolic work in the world was a novel achievement. In their spiritual formation the sisters were constantly reminded that the poor were their masters in whom they should find the face of Christ. Thus, they should never hesitate to leave off other spiritual obligations should they be summoned by those in need.

Louise died on March 15, 1660. By the time of her canonization in 1934, the Daughters of Charity numbered more than 50,000 worldwide.

*“[A Daughter of Charity] is well aware that we are leaving God for God if we leave one of our spiritual exercises for the service of the poor.”*

—St. Louise de Marillac

# Mass

## Monday of the Third Week of Lent\*

\*The following readings may be used on any Lenten day this week, especially in Years B and C when the Gospel of the Samaritan woman is not read on the Third Sunday of Lent: Exod 17:1-7; John 4:5-42.

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 84 (83):3

My soul is longing and yearning for the courts of the Lord. / My heart and my flesh cry out to the living God.

### COLLECT

May your unfailing compassion, O Lord,  
 cleanse and protect your Church,  
 and, since without you she cannot stand secure,  
 may she be always governed by your grace.  
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the second Book of Kings

5:1-15ab

*There were many people with leprosy in Israel, but none were made clean, except Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4:27).*

**N**aaman, the army commander of the king of Aram, was highly esteemed and respected by his master, for through him the LORD had brought victory to Aram. But valiant as he was, the man was a leper. Now the Arameans had captured in a raid on the land of Israel a little girl, who became the servant of Naaman's wife. "If only my master would present himself to the prophet in Samaria," she said to her mistress, "he would cure him of his leprosy." Naaman went and told his lord just what the slave girl from the land of Israel had said. "Go," said the king of Aram. "I will send along a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman set out,

taking along ten silver talents, six thousand gold pieces, and ten festal garments. To the king of Israel he brought the letter, which read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy."

When he read the letter, the king of Israel tore his garments and exclaimed: "Am I a god with power over life and death, that this man should send someone to me to be cured of leprosy? Take note! You can see he is only looking for a quarrel with me!" When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent word to the king: "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me and find out that there is a prophet in Israel."

Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the LORD his God, and would move his hand over the spot, and thus cure the leprosy. Are not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left.

But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, 'Wash and be clean,' should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

He returned with his whole retinue to the man of God. On his arrival he stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel."

The word of the Lord.



RESPONSORIAL PSALM

42:2, 3; 43:3, 4

**R<sup>7</sup>.** (see 42:3) Athirst is my soul for the living God. When shall I go and behold the face of God?

As the hind longs for the running waters,  
so my soul longs for you, O God. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Athirst is my soul for God, the living God.  
When shall I go and behold the face of God? **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Send forth your light and your fidelity;  
they shall lead me on  
And bring me to your holy mountain,  
to your dwelling-place. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Then will I go in to the altar of God,  
the God of my gladness and joy;  
Then will I give you thanks upon the harp,  
O God, my God! **R<sup>7</sup>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

See Psalm 130:5, 7

I hope in the LORD, I trust in his word;  
with him there is kindness and plenteous redemption.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 4:24-30

*Like Elijah and Elisha, Jesus was sent not only to the Jews.*

Jesus said to the people in the synagogue at Nazareth: "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When the people in the synagogue heard this,

they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May what we offer you, O Lord,  
in token of our service,  
be transformed by you into the sacrament of salvation.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Psalm 117 (116):1, 2

O praise the Lord, all you nations, / for his merciful love  
towards us is great.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May communion in this your Sacrament,  
we pray, O Lord,  
bring with it purification and the unity that is your gift.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Simple, Routine, and Miraculous

A couple years after joining the Jesuits, I was sent to work at a leprosy hospital in India for a summer. Leprosy, more properly called Hansen's disease, is easily treated with a multi-drug therapy, but the poor, especially in rural areas, often lack access to treatments. The disease impacts the skin, eyes, and

peripheral nerves, which reduces feeling in the hands and feet, making them susceptible to infectious cuts.

Our work in the hospital was simple and routine. We brought patients to the dressing room to care for their wounds, and we helped the patients' families. Facing discrimination that still comes with carrying the disease, many stayed for weeks and months. The hospital compound featured a school for children and small bungalows for elderly patients who could not return home.

I cannot imagine a leprosy patient turning down a cure. Yet remarkably, Naaman the Syrian initially did just that. Instructed to simply wash in the river, he declined, expecting a much more dramatic and extraordinary gesture from the prophet. Lowering his expectations, Naaman dipped seven times in the Jordan. He became free of his ailment and the accompanying shame. He also experienced a religious conversion, underscored for Christian readers by the baptismal imagery of water.

In our own suffering or anger at injustice, we sometimes yearn for a dramatic rescue or pyrotechnic display of force. But the miraculous is often found in what we rashly consider too ordinary. In India, we offered fresh bandages and healing medication. We held and carried those who were called "untouchable," and we offered them a simple but dignified place to stay.

Through what is most ordinary and human, we can find and offer extraordinary healing. It may not be dramatic, but it is more than enough.

Fr. Kevin O'Brien

*Kevin O'Brien, SJ, is president of Santa Clara University and author of The Ignatian Adventure: Experiencing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius in Daily Life.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 7:2-8, 18

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O LORD, my God, I take refuge in you.  
Save and rescue me from all my pursuers,  
lest like a lion they tear me apart,  
and drag me off with no one to rescue me.

If I have done this, O LORD, my God,  
if there is wrong on my hands,  
if I have paid back evil for good,  
or plundered my foe without cause:

Then let my foes pursue my soul and seize me,  
let them trample my life to the ground,  
and lay my honor in the dust.

O LORD, rise up in your anger;  
be exalted in your fury toward my foes.  
Awake for me the justice you have ordered.  
Let the company of peoples gather round you,  
as you take your seat above them on high.

I thank the LORD for divine righteousness,  
and sing to the name of the LORD, the Most High.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 3:21-26

**N**]ow the righteousness of God has been manifested  
apart from the law, though testified to by the law and  
the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in  
Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction;

all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as an expiation, through faith, by his blood, to prove his righteousness because of the forgiveness of sins previously committed, through the forbearance of God—to prove his righteousness in the present time, that he might be righteous and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Saving God, you are justice for the poor. In hope we pray:

**R.** Awaken us with your Spirit, O God.

Strengthen the faith of those who believe in you, and help us to fix our hearts on advancing the reign of your love. **R.**

Animate efforts to change the course of war, the training of child soldiers, and the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons. **R.**

Inspire religious communities that are reconfiguring their temporal structures and reanimating their spiritual foundation. **R.**

**Our Father . . .**

May we prefer nothing to the love of Christ, and may he bring us together to everlasting life. Amen.

Tuesday, March 17

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 18:2-3, 7-8, 17-20

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I love you, LORD, my strength;  
O LORD, my rock, my fortress, my savior;  
my God, my rock where I take refuge;  
my shield, my saving strength, my stronghold.

In my anguish I called to the LORD;  
I cried to my God for help.  
In the heavenly temple my voice was heard;  
my crying reached God's ears.

The earth then reeled and rocked;  
the mountains were shaken to their base,  
quaking at the anger of God.

From on high God reached down and seized me,  
drew me forth from the mighty waters,  
and saved me from my powerful foe,  
from my enemies, whose strength I could not match.

They assailed me in the day of my misfortune,  
but the LORD was my strong support,  
bringing me out to a place of freedom,  
saving me, indeed, with delight.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 1:4-6

**D**o not be like your ancestors to whom the earlier prophets proclaimed: Thus says the LORD of hosts:

Turn from your evil ways and from your wicked deeds. But they did not listen or pay attention to me—oracle of the LORD.—Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, can they live forever? But my words and my statutes, with which I charged my servants the prophets, did these not overtake your ancestors? Then they repented and admitted: “Just as the LORD of hosts intended to treat us according to our ways and deeds, so the LORD has done.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Lord, do not take your mercy from us.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Saving God, our stronghold and shield, you are our strength. In company with St. Patrick we pray: **R7.** God, come to our aid.

Let your word bring forth a harvest of peace and unity in Ireland and all of Europe. **R7.**

Inspire parents, catechists, pastors, and all who nurture the faith of children and adolescents. **R7.**

Animate efforts to assist those who hunger or suffer from famine. **R7.**

**Our Father . . .**

May Christ be ever before us, beside us, within us, and around us. Amen.

## *Blessed Among Us*

### **Franziska Jägerstätter**

Wife and Mother (1913–2013)

On August 9, 1943, Franz Jägerstätter, an Austrian farmer and devout Catholic, was beheaded by the Nazis for refusing to serve in Hitler's army. Having determined that the Nazis were a demonic force, he believed it would endanger his soul to take the military oath. Neighbors thought him mad—or at least a religious fanatic. His pastor and even his bishop tried to dissuade him. The one person who stood by his side was his wife Franziska. Naturally, she would have preferred not to lose her husband, the father of their three daughters. But she honored his conscience and did nothing to dissuade him from his path. As she wrote, “We helped one another go forward in faith.”

The letters Franz and his wife exchanged after his arrest reflect their deep love for one another. “Dearly beloved husband,” Franziska's letters begin. Trying her best to spare Franz the details of her own difficulties, she hoped for the best, while constantly expressing her submission to God's will. After learning of his death, she wrote, “I have lost a good husband and exemplary father for my children. . . . However, the loving God had ordained things to be otherwise, and our beautiful union was lost. I already look forward to our reunion in heaven where no war can any longer separate us.”

Franziska was alive in 2007 to attend the ceremony of Franz's beatification. She died on March 16, 2013, shortly after her hundredth birthday.

*“It was a long Good Friday. But I feel I am closer to Easter now.”*

—Franziska Jägerstätter



# Mass

*Tuesday of the Third Week of Lent*

[*St. Patrick, opt. memorial*]

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 17 (16):6, 8

To you I call, for you will surely heed me, O God; / turn your ear to me; hear my words. / Guard me as the apple of your eye; / in the shadow of your wings protect me.

## COLLECT

May your grace not forsake us, O Lord, we pray,  
but make us dedicated to your holy service  
and at all times obtain for us your help.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel 3:25, 34-43**

*We ask you to receive us with humble and contrite hearts.*

**A**zariah stood up in the fire and prayed aloud: / “For your name’s sake, O Lord, do not deliver us up forever, / or make void your covenant. / Do not take away your mercy from us, / for the sake of Abraham, your beloved, / Isaac your servant, and Israel your holy one, / To whom you promised to multiply their offspring / like the stars of heaven, / or the sand on the shore of the sea. / For we are reduced, O Lord, beyond any other nation, / brought low everywhere in the world this day / because of our sins. / We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, / no burnt offering, sacrifice, oblation, or incense, / no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you. / But with contrite heart and humble spirit / let us be received; / As though it were burnt offerings of rams and bullocks, / or thousands of fat

lambs, / So let our sacrifice be in your presence today / as we follow you unreservedly; / for those who trust in you cannot be put to shame. / And now we follow you with our whole heart, / we fear you and we pray to you. / Do not let us be put to shame, / but deal with us in your kindness and great mercy. / Deliver us by your wonders, / and bring glory to your name, O Lord.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9

**R<sub>1</sub>.** (6a) Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;  
teach me your paths,  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my savior. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

Remember that your compassion, O LORD,  
and your kindness are from of old.  
In your kindness remember me,  
because of your goodness, O LORD. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

Good and upright is the LORD;  
thus he shows sinners the way.  
He guides the humble to justice,  
he teaches the humble his way. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Joel 2:12-13

Even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with your whole heart;  
for I am gracious and merciful.

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

18:21-35

*Unless each of you forgives your brother and sister,  
the Father will not forgive you.*

**P**eter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the Kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’ Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’ Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant us, O Lord, we pray,  
that this saving sacrifice may cleanse us of our faults  
and become an oblation  
pleasing to your almighty power.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 15 (14):1-2

Lord, who may abide in your tent, / and dwell on your  
holy mountain? / Whoever walks without fault and does  
what is just.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the holy partaking of this mystery  
give us life, O Lord, we pray,  
and grant us both pardon and protection.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### No Idle Warning

*So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you  
forgives from your heart.*

Take notice now, for clearly this is no idle warning. The fulfillment of this command calls for the most vigorous obedience. We are all in debt to God, just as other people are in debt to us. Is there anyone who is not God's debtor? Only a person in whom no sin can be found. And is there anyone who has no brother or sister in his debt? . . . No, all are debtors, and have others in debt to them. Accordingly, God who is just has told you how to treat your debtor, because he means to treat his in the same way.

There are two works of mercy which will set us free. They are briefly set down in the gospel in the Lord's own words: *Forgive and you will be forgiven*, and, *Give and you will receive*. The former concerns pardon, the latter generosity. As regards pardon he says: "Just as you want to be forgiven, so someone is in need of your forgiveness." Again, as regards generosity, consider when a beggar asks you for something that you are a beggar too in relation to God. When we pray we are all beggars before God. We are standing at the door of a great householder, or rather, lying prostrate, and begging with tears. We are longing to receive a gift—the gift of God himself.

What does a beggar ask of you? Bread. And you, what do you ask of God, if not Christ who said: *I am the living bread that has come down from heaven*? Do you want to be pardoned? Then pardon others. . . .

*Forgive us our trespasses, as we also forgive those who trespass against us*. Which of our trespasses, all of them or only some? All, you will answer. Do likewise, therefore, with those who have offended you. This is the rule you have laid down for yourself, the condition you have stipulated.

..... St. Augustine, *Sermon 83*

*St. Augustine (354–430) experienced a pivotal conversion as an adult. In 395, within eight years of his baptism, he became bishop of Hippo.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 119:137-144

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

You are righteous, O LORD;  
your judgments are upright.  
You have imposed your decrees with righteousness,  
and with utter fidelity.

I am consumed with zeal,  
for my foes forget your word.  
Your promise has been thoroughly tested,  
and it is cherished by your servant.

Although I am young and despised,  
I do not forget your precepts.  
Your righteousness is righteous forever,  
and your law is truth.

Though anguish and distress have found me,  
your commands are my delight.  
Your decrees are forever just;  
give me insight, and I shall live.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 7:8-11a

**E**]ven if I saddened you by my letter, I do not regret it;  
and if I did regret it ([for] I see that that letter saddened  
you, if only for a while), I rejoice now, not because you were

saddened, but because you were saddened into repentance; for you were saddened in a godly way, so that you did not suffer loss in anything because of us. For godly sorrow produces a salutary repentance without regret, but worldly sorrow produces death. For behold what earnestness this godly sorrow has produced for you.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Lord, deal with us in your great mercy.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Righteous God, your law is truth. Give voice to our faith as we pray: **R**. Let us live your word, O God.

Help us to welcome immigrants, refugees, and newcomers. **R**.

Strengthen us to detach ourselves from empty desires, grudges, and the accumulation of possessions. **R**.

Bless benefactors and donors who share generously of their gifts for the benefit of those in need. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May our Triune God bless us, grant success to our works, and fill our hearts with peace. Amen.

Wednesday, March 18

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 86:1-8

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Turn your ear, O LORD, and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.  
Preserve my soul, for I am faithful;  
save the servant who trusts in you, my God.

Have mercy on me, O Lord,  
for I cry to you all the day long.  
Gladden the soul of your servant,  
for I lift up my soul to you, O Lord.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,  
full of mercy to all who call to you.  
Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer,  
and attend to my voice in supplication.

In the day of distress, I will call to you,  
and surely you will answer me.  
Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord,  
nor works to compare with yours.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 4:1-7

**H**ear, O children, a father's instruction, / be attentive,  
that you may gain understanding! / Yes, excellent ad-  
vice I give you; / my teaching do not forsake. / When I was  
my father's child, / tender, the darling of my mother, / He



taught me and said to me: / “Let your heart hold fast my words: / keep my commands, and live! / Get wisdom, get understanding! / Do not forget or turn aside from the words of my mouth. / Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; / love her, and she will safeguard you; / The beginning of wisdom is: get wisdom; / whatever else you get, get understanding.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Teach God's wonderful deeds to your children and your children's children.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of wisdom and might, you are merciful to every creature. In trust we pray to you: **R<sup>7</sup>**. Hear us, O God.

Reveal to us your hidden wisdom, and teach us to walk always in your peace. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Relieve the anguish of those who suffer chronic pain, illness, or grief. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Gladden the hearts of grandparents, godparents, and guardians. **R<sup>7</sup>**.

Our Father . . .

May God show us mercy and grant us salvation, through Jesus, the wisdom of God. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Doctor of the Church (ca. 315–386)

St. Cyril, known for his moderate temperament, deplored the intrusion of politics into the body of Christ and the tendency of theological differences to end in bitter factionalism. But his was a time of violent controversy, when compromise was reckoned as treason, and it seemed that one's own orthodoxy could be affirmed only by the condemnation of another's error.

Named bishop of Jerusalem in 350, Cyril found himself embroiled in controversies inherited from his predecessor. Jurisdictional disputes with the bishop of Caesarea resulted in Cyril's formal investigation by a local synod. Among the gravest accusations was that Cyril had sold church property—namely, gifts from the emperor—to give alms to the famine-stricken poor. Cyril was condemned and forced into exile. He returned after some years to find himself caught in battles over the Arian heresy. Cyril was accused by members of each side of being too sympathetic to the other. Of his thirty-five years as a bishop, nearly sixteen were spent in exile.

In 1882 Cyril was named a Doctor of the Church, largely on the basis of his *Catechetical Lectures*. These talks, delivered to adult catechumens, represent one of the first systematic accounts of Christian theology, centered on the articles of the creed. They underline Cyril's determination to present the faith in a positive light and to maintain a balance between correct belief and holy action.

*“The way of godliness consists of these two parts, pious doctrines and good works. Neither are the doctrines acceptable to God without good works, nor does God accept works accomplished otherwise than as linked with pious doctrines.”*

—St. Cyril of Jerusalem

# Mass

Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent  
[St. Cyril of Jerusalem, opt. memorial]

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 119 (118):133

Let my steps be guided by your promise; may evil never rule me.

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that, schooled through Lenten observance  
and nourished by your word,  
through holy restraint  
we may be devoted to you with all our heart  
and be ever united in prayer.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

4:1, 5-9

*Keep the commandments and your work will be complete.*

Moses spoke to the people and said: "Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. Therefore, I teach you the statutes and decrees as the LORD, my God, has commanded me, that you may observe them in the land you are entering to occupy. Observe them carefully, for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations, who will hear of all these statutes and say, 'This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people.' For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it as the LORD, our God, is to us whenever

we call upon him? Or what great nation has statutes and decrees that are as just as this whole law which I am setting before you today?

“However, take care and be earnestly on your guard not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children’s children.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20

**R.** (12a) Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem;  
praise your God, O Zion.

For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;  
he has blessed your children within you. **R.**

He sends forth his command to the earth;  
swiftly runs his word!

He spreads snow like wool;  
frost he strews like ashes. **R.**

He has proclaimed his word to Jacob,  
his statutes and his ordinances to Israel.

He has not done thus for any other nation;  
his ordinances he has not made known to them. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

See John 6:63c, 68c

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life;  
you have the words of everlasting life.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

5:17-19

*Whoever keeps and teaches the law will be called great.*

Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the prayers of your people  
along with these sacrificial offerings,  
and defend those who celebrate your mysteries  
from every kind of danger.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 16 (15):11

You will show me the path of life, / the fullness of joy in  
your presence, O Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the heavenly banquet, at which we have been fed,  
sanctify us, O Lord,  
and, cleansing us of all errors,  
make us worthy of your promises from on high.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Mercy in the Crosshairs

Law and order. The words might give a sense of safety and stability, or remind us of a television series. The term may communicate a system of reward and punishment. Some of us like that idea, but the phrase can also stir up images of a strict and merciless judge. We want order, but we also want mercy, especially if we are in the crosshairs.

A former U.S. federal prosecutor recently reflected on civil law and the necessity for judges to remain detached, but to never forget the humanity of both victims and perpetrators. When sentencing the guilty party, the primary focus should be on the victims and what the crime has cost them. Yet the perpetrators might have suffered their own injustices that brought them to this point. Our lives shape us in ways that have unexpected consequences. Human weakness and vulnerability, along with making bad choices, may have led someone to this place. Our worst offense or sin might be exactly what transforms us. Upholding the law is what makes that possible. Who knows this better than Jesus, the one in whom we are transformed?

When Jesus says that he came to uphold and fulfill the law we should be shaken to the core. Not with fear, but with hope. Jesus fulfilling the law offers us a vision of life changed in ways that transcend our imagination but that are not beyond Jesus' power. The law is love, and it is in that love that law and order are found in Christ.

Fran Rossi Szpylczyn

*Fran Rossi Szpylczyn is a writer exploring the intersection of faith and daily life. She is contributor to the Homilists for the Homeless project and blogs at "There Will Be Bread" at [breadhere.wordpress.com](http://breadhere.wordpress.com).*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 42:2-6

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,  
so my soul is yearning for you, my God.

My soul is thirsting for God, the living God;  
when can I enter and appear before the face of God?

My tears have become my bread,  
by day, by night,  
as they say to me all the day long,  
“Where is your God?”

These things will I remember as I pour out my soul:  
for I would go to the place of your wondrous tent,  
all the way to the house of God,  
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,  
the throng keeping joyful festival.

Why are you cast down, my soul;  
why groan within me?  
Hope in God, whom I will praise yet again,  
my saving presence and my God.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 4:1-5

Charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,  
who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing  
and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent  
whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand,  
encourage through all patience and teaching. For

the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Whoever teaches these commandments will be called greatest in God's kingdom.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of compassion and peace, you see our tears and wrap us in your mercy. Secure in your love, we pray: **R7.** God of our yearning, draw near to us.

Give courage and holy perseverance to those who proclaim your word in the face of resistance, ignorance, and ridicule. **R7.**

Further the work of evangelization and ecumenism. **R7.**

Grant to those who hope in you the reward of eternal life in Jesus. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God increase our faith, hope, and love by the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives, through Jesus our brother. Amen.



Thursday, March 19

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 112:1b-9

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Blessed are those who fear the LORD,  
who take great delight in God's commands.  
Their descendants shall be powerful on earth;  
the generation of the upright will be blest.

Riches and wealth are in their houses;  
their righteousness stands firm forever.  
A light rises in the darkness for the upright;  
they are generous, loving and righteous.

It goes well for those who deal generously and lend,  
who conduct their affairs with justice.  
They will never be moved;  
forever shall the righteous be remembered.

They have no fear of evil news;  
with a firm heart, they trust in the LORD.  
With steadfast hearts they will not fear;  
they will see the downfall of their foes.

Openhanded, they give to the poor;  
their righteousness stands firm forever.  
Their might shall be exalted in glory.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Sirach 14:20; 15:1-4, 6

**H**appy those who meditate on Wisdom, / and fix their  
gaze on knowledge.

Whoever fears the LORD will do this; / whoever is practiced in the Law will come to Wisdom. / She will meet him like a mother; / like a young bride she will receive him, / She will feed him with the bread of learning, / and give him the water of understanding to drink. / He will lean upon her and not fall; / he will trust in her and not be put to shame. / Joy and gladness he will find, / and an everlasting name he will inherit.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

His faith was credited to him as righteousness.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Holy Wisdom, we stand in the company of your humble and faith-filled servant Joseph and pray: **R7**. Make us steadfast in your love, O God.

Clarify the vocation of those you call to religious life and lay ministry, and grant discernment to all who seek you. **R7**.

Advance your Church's efforts to advocate for the poor and care for the earth. **R7**.

Open our eyes to the wonders of creation, and help us to appreciate the cycle of life, death, and rebirth present in all of nature. **R7**.

Our Father . . .

Through the intercession of St. Joseph, husband of Mary, may God strengthen us in our vocation to love in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Antonio de Andrade

Jesuit Missionary and Explorer (1580–1634)

Antonio de Andrade was born in Portugal. After entering the Jesuits he set out for the Portuguese colony of Goa in southern India, where he was ordained. Eventually, a new mission took him to the Moghul city of Agra in the north. There he learned Persian, the language of traders, and heard intriguing rumors of a lost community of Christians in the land of Tibet. Disguised as Hindus, he and a Jesuit brother joined a caravan of pilgrims and made their way north up the Ganges and through the Himalayas. Braving hunger, snow blindness, and frostbite, they crossed the pass at an altitude of 18,000 feet and became the first Westerners in Tibet.

Andrade settled in the town of Tsaparang in the kingdom of Guge. The local king was intrigued by the foreigner's story and his exotic religion. Though not moved to convert, the king begged Andrade to remain and allowed him to build a small "house of prayer." Andrade, realizing there were no Christians in Tibet, was anxious to return to Goa and issue a report, but he promised to return. And so he did, with other Jesuits, making several journeys back and forth. An account of his adventures, published in Lisbon, quickly became an international "best seller." Ultimately, Andrade was assigned to other missions. A new king in Tibet was less friendly to Christianity, and the mission dissolved. Andrade never returned. He died on March 19, 1634.

*"It was all dazzling whiteness to our eyes, and we could make out no sign of the route we were to follow."*

—Antonio de Andrade, SJ

## Mass

*St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Solemnity*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Luke 12:42

Behold, a faithful and prudent steward, / whom the Lord set over his household.

GLORIA (p. 336)

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that by Saint Joseph's intercession  
your Church may constantly watch over  
the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation,  
whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the second Book of Samuel

7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16

*The Lord God will give him the throne of David,  
his father (Luke 1:32).*

**T**he LORD spoke to Nathan and said: "Go, tell my servant David, 'When your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. It is he who shall build a house for my name. And I will make his royal throne firm forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever.'"

The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29

**R.** (37) The son of David will live for ever.

The promises of the LORD I will sing forever;  
 through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your  
 faithfulness,

For you have said, “My kindness is established forever”;  
 in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness. **R.**

“I have made a covenant with my chosen one,  
 I have sworn to David my servant:  
 Forever will I confirm your posterity  
 and establish your throne for all generations.” **R.**

“He shall say of me, ‘You are my father,  
 my God, the Rock, my savior.’  
 Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him,  
 and my covenant with him stands firm.” **R.**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

4:13, 16-18, 22

*Abraham believed, hoping against hope.*

**B**rothers and sisters: It was not through the law that the promise was made to Abraham and his descendants that he would inherit the world, but through the righteousness that comes from faith. For this reason, it depends on faith, so that it may be a gift, and the promise may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not to those who only adhere to the law but to those who follow the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all of us, as it is written, *I have made you father of many nations*. He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist. He believed, hoping against hope, that he would become *the father of many nations*, according

to what was said, *Thus shall your descendants be.* That is why *it was credited to him as righteousness.*

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Psalm 84:5**

Blessed are those who dwell in your house, O Lord;  
they never cease to praise you.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

**1:16, 18-21, 24a (alt. Luke 2:41-51a)**

*Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him.*

**J**acob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ.

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**CREED** (p. 337)

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We pray, O Lord,  
that, just as Saint Joseph served with loving care  
your Only Begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary,  
so we may be worthy to minister  
with a pure heart at your altar.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matthew 25:21

Well done, good and faithful servant. / Come, share your  
master's joy.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Defend with unfailing protection,  
O Lord, we pray,  
the family you have nourished  
with food from this altar,  
as they rejoice at the Solemnity of Saint Joseph,  
and graciously keep safe your gifts among them.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Choosing to Trust

He went to bed feeling betrayed. The woman he loved, the betrothed he was to marry, had just told him she was pregnant. In this sparse narrative, Joseph appears impassive, even stoic, as he receives the news. But surely he was hurt. No matter how saintly a man he was, it is hard to imagine that Joseph wasn't angry. Maybe he raged against the night. Maybe he wept himself to sleep. Either way, Joseph must have ended

the day feeling wronged, with no mind to forgive and forget.

We all know Mary had done nothing wrong. But on that day, Mary was the only one in the whole world who knew for certain that a miracle had taken place. Joseph had every right to break off the engagement. He had every right to be furious, to refuse to trust Mary ever again. Yet he wakes up the next morning willing to reconcile. He has a dream that softens his heart, and he returns to Mary ready to work things out.

Anyone who has deeply loved another knows how much it hurts when a promise is broken. When you are wounded by a friend, it can seem impossible to forgive. Keep in mind, Joseph never gets definitive proof that Mary is innocent. Instead he chooses to trust. He decides to let go of whatever hurt or doubt or grievances he was entitled to carry. Had he not, had he instead held onto these things, bearing a grudge against Mary, it would have poisoned their life together. Instead, Joseph found liberation in letting go, and so helped bring Christ into the world.

..... Edward P. Hahnenberg

*Edward P. Hahnenberg, PhD, is the author of Theology for Ministry: An Introduction for Lay Ministers and other titles. He teaches at John Carroll University.*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 111:1b-2, 5-10

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I will thank the LORD with all my heart,  
in the meeting of the just and the assembly.  
Great are the works of the LORD,  
to be pondered by all who delight in them.

You give food to those who revere you;  
you are mindful of your covenant forever.  
You have shown mighty works to your people  
by giving them the heritage of nations.

Your handiwork is justice and truth,  
your precepts are all of them sure,  
standing firm forever and ever,  
wrought in uprightness and truth.

You have sent redemption to your people,  
and established your covenant forever.  
Holy your name, to be feared.

Fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
understanding marks all who live by it.  
Your praise endures forever!

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:28-30

**W**e know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn

among many brothers. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Great are the works of the Lord, to be pondered by all who delight in them.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of love, you entrusted Jesus to the care of Joseph and Mary. In hope we pray: **R**. Let your will be done in us, O God.

Prosper the labor of carpenters, architects, and engineers. **R**.

Fortify the faith of catechumens, sponsors, and catechists. **R**.

Strengthen the bonds of love in families and between friends. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God fill us with peace and, at our life's ending, grant us a happy death, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

Friday, March 20

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

### PSALM 12

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Save me, O LORD, for the holy ones are no more;  
the faithful have vanished from the human race.  
They babble vanities, one to another,  
with cunning lips, with divided heart.

May the LORD destroy all cunning lips,  
the tongue that utters boastful words,  
Those who say, “We prevail with our tongue;  
our lips are our own, who can command us?”

“For the poor who are oppressed and the needy who sigh,  
now will I arise,” says the LORD;

“I will grant them the salvation for which they long.”  
The words of the LORD are words without alloy,  
silver from the furnace, seven times refined.

It is you, O LORD, who will keep us safe,  
and protect us forever from this generation.  
The wicked prowl on every side,  
while baseness is exalted by the human race.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 32:1-4

**G**ive ear, O heavens, and let me speak; / let the earth  
hear the words of my mouth! / May my teaching soak  
in like the rain, / and my utterance drench like the dew, /

Like a downpour upon the grass, / like a shower upon the crops. / For I will proclaim the name of the LORD, / praise the greatness of our God!

The Rock—how faultless are his deeds, / how right all his ways! / A faithful God, without deceit, / just and upright is he!

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

God's blessings refresh us like the dew of heaven.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Faithful God, your truth and love stand forever unshaken.

In faith we pray: **R7.** Lead us to your light, O God.

Heal our racist attitudes and actions, and help us to appreciate the gifts with which you have endowed every person, race, and culture. **R7.**

Comfort those whose lives are devastated by natural disaster, and sustain first responders and all who safeguard afflicted communities. **R7.**

Uphold those who live with postwar conflicts, and grant safety to those who are fleeing from danger. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God be gracious to us, protect us from harm, and fill our hearts with wisdom and peace, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Mother Catherine Spalding

Cofounder, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (1793–1858)

Catherine Spalding, who was born in Maryland, moved with her family to Kentucky at the age of three. Soon after, her mother died, and her father abandoned the family. Catherine and her four siblings were taken in and raised by her aunt and uncle, who had ten children of their own. At the age of nineteen she traveled to the new diocese of Bardstown. There, the local bishop, inspired by the success of the Sisters of Charity in Baltimore, had issued a call for young women willing to start a similar congregation in Kentucky to educate the children of the families flocking to the frontier. Catherine was one of three women who answered this call. Together, they formed a new community, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. Though she was the youngest, Catherine was elected superior.

Although the original motive of the congregation was education, the sisters, inspired by the Rule of St. Vincent de Paul, extended their charitable work to include nursing and care for widows and orphans. During an outbreak of cholera the sisters demonstrated great heroism in their care for the sick. Mother Spalding was particularly devoted to the orphanage—“the only place on earth to which my heart clings.” She poured herself out in service to her sisters, those in her care, and to the wider community, thereby fulfilling the motto of her congregation: “The charity of Christ impels us.” She died on March 20, 1858.

*“Our Community must be the center from which all our good works must emanate and in the name of the Community all must be done. Then let none of us be ambitious as to who does more or who does less. God will judge it all hereafter.”*

—Mother Catherine Spalding

# Mass

*Friday of the Third Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 86 (85):8, 10

Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord, / for you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.

COLLECT

Pour your grace into our hearts, we pray, O Lord, that we may be constantly drawn away from unruly desires and obey by your own gift the heavenly teaching you give us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Hosea 14:2-10

*We will not say to the work of our hands: our god.*

Thus says the LORD: / Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God; / you have collapsed through your guilt. / Take with you words, / and return to the LORD; / Say to him, "Forgive all iniquity, / and receive what is good, that we may render / as offerings the bullocks from our stalls. / Assyria will not save us, / nor shall we have horses to mount; / We shall say no more, 'Our god,' / to the work of our hands; / for in you the orphan finds compassion."

I will heal their defection, says the LORD, / I will love them freely; / for my wrath is turned away from them. / I will be like the dew for Israel: / he shall blossom like the lily; / He shall strike root like the Lebanon cedar, / and put forth his shoots. / His splendor shall be like the olive tree / and his fragrance like the Lebanon cedar. / Again they shall dwell in his shade / and raise grain; / They shall blossom like the vine, / and his fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.



## A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

12:28-34

*The Lord our God is one Lord,  
and you shall love the Lord your God.*

One of the scribes came to Jesus and asked him, “Which is the first of all the commandments?” Jesus replied, “The first is this: *Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.* The second is this: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* There is no other commandment greater than these.” The scribe said to him, “Well said, teacher. You are right in saying, *He is One and there is no other than he. And to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself* is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” And when Jesus saw that he answered with understanding, he said to him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

The Gospel of the Lord.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favor, we pray, Lord,  
on the offerings we dedicate,  
that they may be pleasing in your sight  
and always be salutary for us.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Mark 12:33

To love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself, / is worth more than any sacrifice.



### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May your strength be at work in us, O Lord,  
 pervading our minds and bodies,  
 that what we have received  
 by participating in this Sacrament  
 may bring us the fullness of redemption.  
 Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Interpreted with Love

A member of my brother's wife's family loved to get a rise out of my brother, who was deeply committed to his Catholic faith and often "wore it on his sleeve." In one instance Danny asked my brother which three of the ten "amendments" were the most important. "They are *commandments*, Danny!" my brother retorted. And furthermore, he added, "They are *all* important!" We chuckle when this story is told again and again, and delight in my brother's unabashed earnestness.

The scribe in today's Gospel also wants a condensed version of the commandments, asking Jesus for "the first of all the commandments." This is the only instance in Mark's Gospel where a scribe approaches Jesus with a non-adversarial motive. It is quite remarkable to note that the scribe seems to be inviting Jesus into a congenial dialogue. Sensing this, Jesus moves into the scribe's world of Jewish interpretative tradition and quotes the *Shema*, the centerpiece of Jewish prayer: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . and love your neighbor as yourself." For his part, the scribe unhesitatingly recognizes Jesus' grasp of the Scriptures and his ability

to summarize the demands of Torah. “Well said, teacher. You are right . . .” In this exchange Jesus and the scribe seem not to be limited by the rigid boundaries of friend or foe. They encounter one another as equals across an otherwise interpretive divide and *practice* the commandment of love toward each other.

With this stunning example placed before us today, how can we do anything less than *practice* the command of Gospel love in any situation that threatens to divide us from one another?

Sr. Ephrem Hollermann

*Ephrem Hollermann, OSB, is a former prioress of Saint Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, Minnesota, and professor emerita of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 37:1-7, 10-11

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Do not fret because of the wicked;  
do not envy those who do evil,  
for they wither quickly like grass  
and fade like the green of the fields.

Trust in the LORD and do good;  
then you will dwell in the land and find safe pasture.  
Find your delight in the LORD,  
who grants your heart's desire.

Commit your way to the LORD;  
if you trust, then God will act,  
and make your righteousness shine like the light,  
your justice like the noonday sun.

Be still before the LORD and wait in patience;  
do not fret at the one who prospers,  
the one who makes evil plots.

A little longer—and the wicked are gone.  
Look at their place: they are not there.  
But the meek shall inherit the land  
and delight in fullness of peace.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Romans 14:13-18

Let us no longer judge one another, but rather resolve never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus

that nothing is unclean in itself; still, it is unclean for someone who thinks it unclean. If your brother is being hurt by what you eat, your conduct is no longer in accord with love. Do not because of your food destroy him for whom Christ died. So do not let your good be reviled. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit; whoever serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by others.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of lasting love, you call us to be one in Jesus. Fortify our hearts by your Spirit as we pray: **R**. Let us find our delight in you, O God.

Kindle in children the gift of wonder. **R**.

Animate in adolescents the gift of faith. **R**.

Instill in leaders the desire to serve with justice. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God strengthen us to wait in patience, commit our way to the Lord, and find our heart's desire, through Jesus our peace. Amen.

Saturday, March 21

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 103:1-2, 11-14, 17-18

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all within me, the holy name of God.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and never forget all God's benefits.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so strong the mercy for those who fear God.  
As far as the east is from the west,  
so far from us does God remove our transgressions.

As a father has compassion on his children,  
divine compassion is on those who fear the LORD,  
who knows of what we are made,  
who remembers that we are dust.

But the love of the LORD is everlasting  
upon those who revere godly ways,  
upon children's children divine righteousness  
for those who keep the covenant,  
and remember to fulfill its commands.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 4:32-35

Ask now of the days of old, before your time, ever since  
God created humankind upon the earth; ask from one  
end of the sky to the other: Did anything so great ever

happen before? Was it ever heard of? Did a people ever hear the voice of God speaking from the midst of fire, as you did, and live? Or did any god venture to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, with strong hand and outstretched arm, and by great terrors, all of which the LORD, your God, did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? All this you were allowed to see that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Let us strive to know the Lord.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Beneficent God, your mercy is upon those who fear you.  
In company with Benedict and all the saints we pray:

**R7.** Living God, let us walk in your love.

Encourage those who experience a call to the monastic, oblate, or ordained life. **R7.**

Sustain parents who face difficult challenges or decisions. **R7.**

Deepen our awareness of the interdependence of humanity and creation, and help us to care for the earth. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with peace and guide us with wisdom's clear light, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Nicholas Flue

Hermit (1417–1487)

St. Nicholas was born in a village in Switzerland and raised in a pious family. Serving in the army, he saw battle on several occasions. Later, he married, raised ten children, and achieved great distinction in the canton of Unterwalden. All the while, however, he maintained a deep life of prayer and asceticism. At the age of fifty he felt a call from God to abandon the world and devote himself to solitude and contemplation. Remarkably, his wife consented to this plan. And so he set off barefoot, carrying nothing but a staff and a rosary.

Nicholas built himself a simple hermitage in a remote area, where he lived quite happily for twenty years. Visitors, drawn by his reputation for holiness and his astute counsel, beat a path to his door. Some were simply curious—intrigued by the story that he subsisted on nothing but the Blessed Sacrament.

In 1481 Nicholas played a vital role in preserving the peace. The Swiss cantons were on the verge of civil war. Someone suggested that the contesting parties should consult the holy hermit, Nicholas. They presented their positions to him, and he negotiated a peaceful settlement. To this day he is honored in Switzerland as a holy peacemaker.

Nicholas died on March 21, 1487. He was canonized in 1947.

*“My Lord and my God, take from me everything that distances me from you. My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me close to you. My Lord and my God, detach me from myself to give my all to you.”*

—St. Nicholas Flue

# Mass

*Saturday of the Third Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 103 (102):2-3

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits; / it is he who forgives all your sins.

COLLECT

Rejoicing in this annual celebration  
of our Lenten observance,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that, with our hearts set on the paschal mysteries,  
we may be gladdened by their full effects.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Hosea 6:1-6

*What I want is love, not sacrifice.*

Come, let us return to the LORD, / it is he who has rent,  
but he will heal us; / he has struck us, but he will bind  
our wounds. / He will revive us after two days; / on the third  
day he will raise us up, / to live in his presence. / Let us  
know, let us strive to know the LORD; / as certain as the dawn  
is his coming, / and his judgment shines forth like the light  
of day! / He will come to us like the rain, / like spring rain  
that waters the earth.”

What can I do with you, Ephraim? / What can I do with  
you, Judah? / Your piety is like a morning cloud, / like the  
dew that early passes away. / For this reason I smote them  
through the prophets, / I slew them by the words of my  
mouth; / For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, / and  
knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

The word of the Lord.



## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

51:3-4, 18-19, 20-21ab

**R.** (see Hosea 6:6) It is mercy I desire, and not sacrifice.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;  
 in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.  
 Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
 and of my sin cleanse me. **R.**

For you are not pleased with sacrifices;  
 should I offer a burnt offering, you would not accept it.  
 My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;  
 a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not  
 spurn. **R.**

Be bountiful, O LORD, to Zion in your kindness  
 by rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem;  
 Then shall you be pleased with due sacrifices,  
 burnt offerings and holocausts. **R.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Psalm 95:8

If today you hear his voice,  
 harden not your hearts.

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 18:9-14**

*The tax collector went home justified, not the Pharisee.*

**J**esus addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. “Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.’ But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner.’ I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for

everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, by whose grace it comes to pass  
that we may approach your mysteries  
with minds made pure,  
grant, we pray,  
that, in reverently handing them on,  
we may offer you fitting homage.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Luke 18:13

The tax collector stood at a distance, beating his breast  
and saying: / O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May we truly revere, O merciful God,  
these holy gifts, by which you ceaselessly nourish us,  
and may we always partake of them  
with abundant faith in our heart.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### The Face of Mercy

And then everything tired in me  
leaned against everything strong  
and I cried out  
Show me the face of mercy.

And the merciful ones answered  
You are most like God  
when you are dressed  
in the robes of mercy.  
Mercy doesn't judge; it loves.

And the merciful ones continued,  
 We are the merciful  
 We are standing at every pathway  
     ready to heal what needs healing  
     ready to forgive what needs forgiving.

Compassion is our way of life  
 Forgiveness is our pastime.  
 We throw it around unconditionally  
     like dew on summer grass  
     like rain on dry, parched earth.

We are those who have been forgiven  
     while still guilty  
 And we can never forget.  
 Forgiveness has touched  
     every fiber of our lives  
 And so we spend our lives *forgiving*. . . .

Then someone from the crowd stepped forth  
 She touched me with her presence as she spoke:  
 “God’s care is greater than your carelessness  
 Go in peace, Your sins are forgiven.”

An overwhelming desire to forgive  
     began to thread its way through my soul  
 Standing on the threshold  
     of my human frailty  
 It gazed into the depths  
     of my soul  
     and became  
     the *Mercy of God*.

..... Sr. Macrina Wiederkehr, *Seasons of Your Heart*

*Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB, is well known for her creative spiritual writings and retreat ministry. She makes her home with the Sisters of St. Scholastica in Fort Smith, Arkansas.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 1

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Blessed indeed are those  
who follow not the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stand in the path with sinners,  
nor abide in the company of scorners,  
but whose delight is the law of the LORD,  
and who ponder God's law day and night.

Such people are like trees that are planted  
beside the flowing waters,  
that yield their fruit in due season,  
and whose leaves shall never fade;  
and all that they do shall prosper.

Not so are the wicked, not so!  
For they, like winnowed chaff,  
shall be driven away by the wind.

When the wicked are judged they shall not rise,  
nor shall sinners in the council of the righteous;  
for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

James 4:6b-10

Scripture] says: / "God resists the proud, / but gives grace to the humble." / So submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and

he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds. Begin to lament, to mourn, to weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

O God, be merciful to me a sinner.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Gracious God, you show us how to love one another. We praise you and pray: **R**. Bless us, O God.

Prosper efforts to care for women in crisis pregnancies, and create in all people a desire to respect life from conception to natural death. **R**.

Free us from falsehood, illusions, and the deception of material gain. **R**.

Revitalize efforts to steward the earth's food and water sources with justice. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God look upon us with favor and shower us with peace, through Jesus, who loved us to death and won for us eternal life. Amen.



Sunday, March 22

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 148:1b-6, 14

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise the Lord in the heights.  
Praise the Lord, all his angels;  
praise the Lord, all his hosts.

Praise the Lord, sun and moon;  
praise the Lord, all shining stars.  
Praise the Lord, highest heavens,  
and the waters above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they were created.  
God established them forever and ever,  
gave a law which shall not pass away.

The Lord exalts the strength of the people,  
and is the praise of all the faithful,  
the praise of the children of Israel,  
of the people to whom our God is close.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 23:1b-4

**T**he oracle of David, son of Jesse; / the oracle of the man  
God raised up, / Anointed of the God of Jacob, / favorite

of the Mighty One of Israel. / The spirit of the LORD spoke through me; / his word was on my tongue. / The God of Israel spoke; / of me the Rock of Israel said, / “One who rules over humankind with justice, / who rules in the fear of God, / Is like the light at sunrise / on a cloudless morning, / making the land’s vegetation glisten after rain.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The Lord sees the heart.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Glorious Trinity, you are exalted above the earth. In hope we pray: **R7.** O God, let your praise resound throughout creation.

Embolden your Church to act with justice on behalf of refugees, immigrants, and those who are fleeing from danger. **R7.**

Deepen our appreciation for the unique ways in which all creatures and persons show forth your glory. **R7.**

Diffuse the light of the Gospel to every land, and strengthen catechumens and all the baptized in faith and joy. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May the Spirit of God rest upon our hearts and guide us along every good path, now and always. Amen.



# Mass

## Fourth Sunday of Lent

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Isaiah 66:10-11

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. / Be joyful, all who were in mourning; / exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

(The Gloria is omitted.)

### COLLECT

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the first Book of Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

*David is anointed as king of Israel.*

**T**he LORD said to Samuel: "Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen my king from among his sons."

As Jesse and his sons came to the sacrifice, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is here before him." But the LORD said to Samuel: "Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him. Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the LORD looks into the heart." In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any one of

these.” Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” Jesse replied, “There is still the youngest, who is tending the sheep.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send for him; we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until he arrives here.” Jesse sent and had the young man brought to them. He was ruddy, a youth handsome to behold and making a splendid appearance. The LORD said, “There—anoint him, for this is the one!” Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed David in the presence of his brothers; and from that day on, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David.

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

**R<sup>7</sup>. (1) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;  
beside restful waters he leads me;  
he refreshes my soul. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

He guides me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the dark valley  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side  
with your rod and your staff  
that give me courage. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

You spread the table before me  
in the sight of my foes;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

Only goodness and kindness follow me  
all the days of my life;  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
for years to come. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

## A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

5:8-14

*Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.*

**B**rothers and sisters: You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says: / “Awake, O sleeper, / and arise from the dead, / and Christ will give you light.”

The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 8:12

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;  
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

9:1-41 (Shorter Form [ ], 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38)

*The man who was blind went off and washed himself and came back able to see.*

**[A**s Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth.] His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him. We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, [he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool

of Siloam”—which means Sent—. So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is,” but others said, “No, he just looks like him.” He said, “I am.”] So they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?” He replied, “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went there and washed and was able to see.” And they said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I don’t know.”

[They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”]

Now the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and gained his sight until they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight. They asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How does he now see?” His parents answered and said, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. We do not know how he sees now, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, he is of age; he can speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone acknowledged him as the Christ, he would be expelled from the synagogue. For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; question him.”

So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give God the praise! We know that this

man is a sinner.” He replied, “If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see.” So they said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” They ridiculed him and said, “You are that man’s disciple; we are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from.” The man answered and said to them, “This is what is so amazing, that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him. It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything.” [They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.] Then Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind.”

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not also blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

We place before you with joy these offerings,  
which bring eternal remedy, O Lord,  
praying that we may both faithfully revere them  
and present them to you, as is fitting,  
for the salvation of all the world.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*Cf. John 9:11, 38*

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, / I saw and  
I believed in God.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world,  
illuminate our hearts, we pray,  
with the splendor of your grace,  
that we may always ponder  
what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty  
and love you in all sincerity.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## *Reflection*

### **“Seeing” Beyond the Miracle**

The story of the healing of the blind man in the Gospel of John has been, since the fourth century, associated with preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. It is a story that participates in the richly symbolic world of the Fourth Gospel. Sight serves as a metaphor for faith in Jesus and the life of discipleship. The journey by which the blind man comes to “see” who Jesus is, is counterposed with the increasing blind-

ness of “the Jews,” a designation that actually refers not to first-century Judaism in general but to a small subset of religious leaders opposed to Jesus. As the biblical scholar Francis Moloney has noted, in this story the religious leaders are preoccupied with *how* such a miracle could have happened, whereas the real question at issue is *who* Jesus really is. Like so many of us, “the man born blind” comes to this insight only gradually. Initially, he identifies the one who healed him simply as “the man called Jesus.” The interrogation he undergoes leads him to acknowledge Jesus as “a prophet.” But it is only by way of direct engagement with Jesus that he acknowledges him as “the Son of Man,” a title that suggests Jesus is the one who makes God known in human history.

In this story, acquiring sight is all about recognizing the true identity of Jesus and learning to live out of that truth. This Gospel insight is complemented by the Letter to the Ephesians, which invites followers of Jesus to “live as children of light.” Our Lenten journey alongside those moving toward baptism is about learning to see Jesus as the one who gives true meaning to our lives.

Richard R. Gaillardetz

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## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 116:10-19

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

I trusted, even when I said,  
“I am sorely afflicted,”  
and when I said in my alarm,  
“All people are untruthful.”

How can I repay the LORD  
for all the goodness shown to me?  
The cup of salvation I will raise;  
I will call on the name of the LORD.

My vows to the LORD I will fulfill  
before all the people.  
How precious in the eyes of the LORD  
is the death of God’s faithful.

Your servant, LORD, your servant am I,  
you have loosened my bonds.  
I will offer you a thanksgiving sacrifice;  
I will call on the name of the LORD.

My vows to the LORD I will fulfill  
before all the people,  
in the courts of the house of the LORD,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

1 John 1:5-9

**N**ow this is the message that we have heard from him  
and proclaim to you: God is light, and in him there is



no darkness at all. If we say, “We have fellowship with him,” while we continue to walk in darkness, we lie and do not act in truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin. If we say, “We are without sin,” we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Awake, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Creating God, we rejoice in your goodness and pray:

**R.** Give us your saving help, O God.

Heal those who suffer from betrayal, unjust treatment, or trauma. **R.**

Strengthen those who suffer chronic pain, stress, or illness. **R.**

Receive into your everlasting light those who have died in faith. **R.**

Our Father . . .

May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us forever. Amen.

March 22–28

Fourth Week of Lent

## *Within the Word*

### **Seeing and Believing**

An ordinary encounter becomes extraordinary. A group of travelers encounter a man, blind from birth, sitting by the side of the road and begging. These are not ordinary travelers who might toss insults or coins. Jesus' disciples seem to see the unnamed man as an opportunity for a theological discussion of sin and illness. But Jesus sees the man and his need for healing—healing that would restore him to his community rather than leaving him to exist on the fringes. Jesus' healing action is most ordinary. He makes mud from dirt and spit to smear on the man's eyes. It doesn't get more ordinary than that! Yet when the man washes the mud from his eyes, the results are amazing. He can see for the first time.

As the man begins to see, the scope of the story expands to include the townspeople, the synagogue leaders, and the man's parents. They seek an explanation for this extraordinary event. Perhaps it is not surprising that they react with fear. After all, what has happened is entirely new to them. No one has ever healed a man born blind! And on the Sabbath! How can breaking the law bring such a wondrous result? Unsatisfied with the man's answers and unwilling to face their fears, they toss the man—and their questions—aside.

Then the story's scope narrows once again, to the man and Jesus. Jesus requests no payment or adulation in response to this miraculous healing. Instead, he offers an invitation to believe in the Son of Man, an invitation to faith. Faith is the bridge that moves us from a world of fear-filled questions to

the path of discipleship. St. Anselm taught that we believe in order to understand. Thus, faith precedes understanding and challenges us to understand even familiar things in new ways. Or a more contemporary example (and a shift in seasons!), in the movie *The Santa Clause*, Scott Calvin winds up at the North Pole to discover that he is the new Santa Claus. Overwhelmed by the news and everything around him, Scott looks out a window and sees a polar bear directing traffic! When he exclaims, “I see it, but I don’t believe it!” a wise elf explains that “seeing isn’t believing; believing is seeing.”

Similarly, the man born blind learns that even though he can see his parents and his town for the first time, Jesus offers him a deeper sight as well. If he believes, he will see more than he ever imagined. He will see and understand in new and extraordinary ways if he follows Jesus and conforms his life to God’s will.

Jesus offers the sight that comes through faith to all those called by his name and washed in the waters of baptism. As believers, we are called and empowered to see with God’s eyes. We do not see the poor and the marginalized, the sick and disabled, the abandoned and unwelcome, as problems to be solved but as children of God to be cherished. They are not burdens to be managed but opportunities for encounter. The needs of our parishes, communities, and world offer graced moments of healing from our blindness so that we can see God at work, even in the humble, ordinary people and moments waiting for us along the side of the road.

—Mary Elizabeth Sperry

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Monday, March 23

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 31:10-11, 15-18

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Have mercy on me, O LORD,

for I am in distress.

My eyes are wasted away with grief,

as are my soul and my body.

For my life is spent with sorrow,

and my years with sighs.

Affliction has broken down my strength,

and my bones waste away.

But as for me, I trust in you, O LORD;

I say, “You are my God.

There in your hands is my lot;

from the hands of my enemies deliver me,

and from those who pursue me.

“Let your face shine on your servant.

Save me in your faithful love.

Let me not be put to shame, O LORD,

for I call on you;

Let the wicked be shamed!

Let them be silenced in Sheol!”

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Kings 17:20-23

**E**lijah] called out to the LORD: “LORD, my God, will you afflict even the widow with whom I am staying by killing her son?” Then he stretched himself out upon the child three times and he called out to the LORD: “LORD, my God, let the life breath return to the body of this child.” The LORD heard the prayer of Elijah; the life breath returned to the child’s body and he lived. Taking the child, Elijah carried him down into the house from the upper room and gave him to his mother. Elijah said, “See! Your son is alive.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

Jesus assured the royal official, “Your child will live.”

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Nurturing God, you delight in our living and strengthen our spirits. In faith we pray: **R7**. Show us mercy, God.

Help us to build up one another in love. **R7**.

Stop corrupt officials, and convict drug cartels. **R7**.

Strengthen those who are undergoing treatment for cancer and other serious afflictions. **R7**.

Our Father . . .

May God animate our voices in praise and bless us with a rich harvest of the Spirit’s gifts, through Jesus our brother. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Rebecca Ar-Rayès

Nun (1832–1914)

Rebecca Ar-Rayès (Rafqa Butrusia) was born in 1832 to a Maronite Christian family in Lebanon. In 1855 she entered a convent in Ghazir—the same year as a terrible outbreak of violence by Druze militia against the Christian population. While thousands of Christians were massacred, Rebecca and the other sisters were hidden by friendly Arabs. When her congregation dissolved, she entered a new convent of the Baladiya Order. She cheerfully took to contemplative life, eagerly performing any assignment and even volunteering to share the punishment for the infractions of other sisters.

So privileged did Rebecca feel in her new life that she feared she would become spoiled. She prayed to God that she might experience some of Christ's suffering and so relieve the suffering of others. Soon after she lost her vision; this was followed by increasing paralysis that allowed her only to knit and pray the rosary. She accepted these ordeals without a murmur. Her sufferings, she said, were nothing compared to Christ's agony. "I have sins to expiate, but he, in his love for us, has borne an infinite degree of opprobrium and so much suffering, and we think so little of it."

She died on March 23, 1914, at eighty-one. She was canonized in 2001.

*"May the sick, the afflicted, the war refugees, and all victims of hatred, yesterday and today, find in St. Rafqa a companion on the road, so that, through her intercession, they will continue to search in the night for reasons to hope again and build peace."*

—Pope John Paul II

# Mass

*Monday of the Fourth Week of Lent\**  
 [St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, opt. memorial]

\*The following readings may be used on any day this week, especially in Years B and C when the Gospel of the man born blind is not read on the Fourth Sunday of Lent: Mic 7:7-9; John 9:1-41.

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 31 (30):7-8

As for me, I trust in the Lord. / Let me be glad and rejoice  
 in your mercy, / for you have seen my affliction.

## COLLECT

O God, who renew the world  
 through mysteries beyond all telling,  
 grant, we pray,  
 that your Church may be guided by your eternal design  
 and not be deprived of your help in this present age.  
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, for ever and ever.

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 65:17-21**

*No longer shall the sound of weeping or the sound of crying  
 be heard.*

**T**hus says the LORD: / Lo, I am about to create new heav-  
 ens / and a new earth; / The things of the past shall not  
 be remembered / or come to mind. / Instead, there shall  
 always be rejoicing and happiness / in what I create; / For I  
 create Jerusalem to be a joy / and its people to be a delight;  
 / I will rejoice in Jerusalem / and exult in my people. / No  
 longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, / or the  
 sound of crying; / No longer shall there be in it / an infant  
 who lives but a few days, / or an old man who does not

round out his full lifetime; / He dies a mere youth who reaches but a hundred years, / and he who fails of a hundred shall be thought accursed. / They shall live in the houses they build, / and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b

**R<sub>1</sub>.** (2a) I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

I will extol you, O LORD, for you drew me clear  
and did not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD, you brought me up from the nether world;  
you preserved me from among those going down into  
the pit. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

Sing praise to the LORD, you his faithful ones,  
and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger lasts but a moment;  
a lifetime, his good will.

At nightfall, weeping enters in,  
but with the dawn, rejoicing. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

“Hear, O LORD, and have pity on me;  
O LORD, be my helper.”

You changed my mourning into dancing;

O LORD, my God, forever will I give you thanks. **R<sub>1</sub>.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Amos 5:14

Seek good and not evil so that you may live,  
and the LORD will be with you.



A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 4:43-54

*Go, your son will live.*

At that time Jesus left [Samaria] for Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his native place. When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast.

Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death. Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and left. While the man was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live. He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe. Now this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May we receive, O Lord, we pray,  
the effects of this offering dedicated to you,  
so that we may be cleansed from old earthly ways  
and be renewed by growth in heavenly life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Ezekiel 36:27

I will place my spirit within you / and make you walk according to my laws; / and my judgments you shall keep and observe, says the Lord.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May your holy gifts, O Lord, we pray,  
give us life by making us new,  
and, by sanctifying us, lead us to things eternal.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Keep Walking

“Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth,” God says. A new earth sounds wonderful right now, doesn’t it? A more peaceful earth, a cleaner earth, a place of peace and of healing.

I recently read *The Mission Walker*, an astonishing travel diary written by Edie Littlefield Sundby. She walked the entire historic 1600-mile *El Camino Real de las Californias*, the old mission trail from Loreto, Mexico, to Sonoma, California. She did it with one lung, after surviving widespread metastasis of stage IV gall bladder cancer and 79 rounds of aggressive chemotherapy. She’d been given three months to live.

What is the point of it all, one might ask, a dying woman forcing herself through often desolate and harsh landscapes in order to reach another mission, some of them decrepit and long abandoned? We might see Sundby’s journey as an excruciating exercise in nostalgia. Yet unseen is what God is doing in her tormented body. As she pushes herself on to every

single mission site (some still in use, most in ruins), she is being healed. She lives today, twelve years after her diagnosis and six years after setting out on her hero's journey.

Of this stunning pilgrimage, Sundby says: "If I was walking, I was alive."

Might that be what the Spirit is saying to us as Church, the People of God? Even the Notre Dame Cathedral is under construction again. We all are. God is doing something new. Keep walking, Church. It just might be that God is healing us too.

Kathy McGovern

*Kathy McGovern, a former instructor in the Denver Catholic Biblical School, is a writer and teacher in the Denver area. She writes weekly reflections that connect Scripture with life: [www.thestoryandyou.com](http://www.thestoryandyou.com).*



## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 66:8-12, 16-20

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O peoples, bless our God;  
let our voice of praise resound,  
to the God who gave life to our souls  
and kept our feet from stumbling.

For you, O God, have tested us,  
you have tried us as silver is tried;  
you led us, God, into the snare;  
you laid a heavy burden on our backs.

You let people ride over our heads;  
we went through fire and through water,  
but then you brought us to a place of plenty.

Come and hear, all who fear God;  
I will tell what God has done for my soul.  
To the Lord I cried aloud,  
with exaltation ready on my tongue.

Had I cherished evil in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened.  
But truly God has listened,  
and has heeded the voice of my prayer.  
Blest be God, who did not reject my prayer,  
nor withhold from me faithful love.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Revelation 21:1-3

**T**hen I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them [as their God]."

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

Shout for joy! I am creating new heavens and a new earth.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Abiding God, you are always with us, dwelling beside us. With joyful trust we pray: **R7**. Have mercy on us, O God.

Secure the temporal, physical, and emotional needs of the military, veterans, and their families. **R7**.

Satisfy the needs of those who suffer mental illness, and sustain their caregivers in patience and love. **R7**.

Save those whose lives are threatened by war, poverty, or acts of violence. **R7**.

**Our Father . . .**

May the Spirit of God abide in us forever, through Jesus our companion and our hope. Amen.

Tuesday, March 24

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 33:8-13, 20-22

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Let all the earth fear the LORD,  
all who live in the world show reverence.  
God spoke, and it came to be;  
commanded and it stood in place.

The LORD frustrates the designs of the nations,  
and defeats the plans of the peoples.  
The designs of the LORD stand forever,  
the plans of God's heart from age to age.

Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD,  
the people God has chosen as a heritage.  
From the heavens the LORD looks forth,  
and sees the whole human race.

Our soul is waiting for the LORD,  
our God, our help and our shield.  
In you do our hearts find joy;  
we trust in your holy name.  
May your faithful love be upon us,  
as we hope in you, O LORD.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 14:6-9

On that day there will no longer be cold or frost. There will be one continuous day—it is known to the LORD—

not day and night, for in the evening there will be light. On that day, fresh water will flow from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea, and half to the western sea. This will be so in summer and in winter. The LORD will be king over the whole earth; on that day the LORD will be the only one, and the LORD's name the only one.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Where these waters flow they refresh; everything lives where the river goes.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Creating God, we revere you in all creation. In faith we pray: **R7.** Let our hearts reflect your love, O God.

Help us to show compassion to those who are troubled in mind, body, or spirit. **R7.**

Bless and protect law enforcement personnel, and uphold efforts to end gun violence. **R7.**

Give patience, faith, and hope to those who struggle with change. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with peace and refresh our spirits by the power of the Word. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. Oscar Romero

Archbishop and Martyr (1917–1980)

From his installation as archbishop of San Salvador in 1977 until his death three years later, Oscar Romero emerged as a tireless defender of justice, peace, and the cause of the poor. His weekly sermons cast the glaring light of the Gospel on the realities of the day. As he said, “A church that does not unite itself to the poor . . . is not truly the Church of Jesus Christ.” In the face of so many brutal deaths, including many of his priests, Romero clearly anticipated his own fate. “One who is committed to the poor must risk the same fate as the poor . . . to disappear, to be tortured, to be captive, and to be found dead.”

On March 24, 1980, while saying Mass in the chapel of the cancer hospital where he lived, Romero was killed by a sniper’s shot. It might have seemed natural that he would be proclaimed a martyr, but for many years Romero’s cause was blocked by powerful prelates who claimed he had not died for his faith but for mixing himself up in politics. This charge was answered by the postulator of Romero’s cause who said his assassination “was not caused by motives that were simply political, but by hatred for a faith that, imbued with charity, would not be silent in the face of the injustices that relentlessly and cruelly slaughtered the poor and their defenders.”

In 2015, following a decree that he had died as a martyr and was killed out of “hatred of the faith,” Archbishop Oscar Romero was beatified. His canonization followed in 2018.

*“Martyrdom is a great gift from God that I do not believe I have earned. But if God accepts the sacrifice of my life then may my blood be the seed of liberty, and a sign of hope that will soon become a reality. . . . A bishop will die, but the church of God—the people—will never die.”*

—St. Oscar Romero



# Mass

*Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent*

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Isaiah 55:1

All who are thirsty, come to the waters, says the Lord. /  
Though you have no money, come and drink with joy.

## COLLECT

May the venerable exercises of holy devotion  
shape the hearts of your faithful, O Lord,  
to welcome worthily the Paschal Mystery  
and proclaim the praises of your salvation.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel** 47:1-9, 12

*I saw water flowing from the temple, and all who were touched  
by it were saved (see Roman Missal).*

**T**he angel brought me, Ezekiel, back to the entrance of the temple of the LORD, and I saw water flowing out from beneath the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the façade of the temple was toward the east; the water flowed down from the right side of the temple, south of the altar. He led me outside by the north gate, and around to the outer gate facing the east, where I saw water trickling from the right side. Then when he had walked off to the east with a measuring cord in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and had me wade through the water, which was ankle-deep. He measured off another thousand and once more had me wade through the water, which was now knee-deep. Again he measured off a thousand and had me wade; the water was up to my waist. Once more he measured off a thousand, but

there was now a river through which I could not wade; for the water had risen so high it had become a river that could not be crossed except by swimming. He asked me, "Have you seen this, son of man?" Then he brought me to the bank of the river, where he had me sit. Along the bank of the river I saw very many trees on both sides. He said to me, "This water flows into the eastern district down upon the Arabah, and empties into the sea, the salt waters, which it makes fresh. Wherever the river flows, every sort of living creature that can multiply shall live, and there shall be abundant fish, for wherever this water comes the sea shall be made fresh. Along both banks of the river, fruit trees of every kind shall grow; their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail. Every month they shall bear fresh fruit, for they shall be watered by the flow from the sanctuary. Their fruit shall serve for food, and their leaves for medicine."

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9

**R<sup>7</sup>. (8) The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.**

God is our refuge and our strength,  
an ever-present help in distress.

Therefore we fear not, though the earth be shaken  
and mountains plunge into the depths of the sea. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

There is a stream whose runlets gladden the city of God,  
the holy dwelling of the Most High.

God is in its midst; it shall not be disturbed;  
God will help it at the break of dawn. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

The LORD of hosts is with us;  
our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

Come! behold the deeds of the LORD,  
the astounding things he has wrought on earth. **R<sup>7</sup>.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Psalm 51:12a, 14a

A clean heart create for me, O God;  
give me back the joy of your salvation.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 5:1-16

*Immediately the man became well.*

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.

Now that day was a sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a sabbath.

The Gospel of the Lord.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer to you, O Lord,  
these gifts which you yourself have bestowed;  
may they attest to your care as Creator  
for this our mortal life,  
and effect in us the healing  
that brings us immortality.  
Through Christ our Lord.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 23 (22):1-2

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. /  
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me  
repose, / near restful waters he leads me.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Purify our minds, O Lord, we pray,  
and renew them with this heavenly Sacrament,  
that we may find help for our bodies  
now and likewise in times to come.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### What We Are Meant to Do

Prayer as we know it and talk about it can be very seductive. “Pray that Grandpa gets well,” we tell a child—all the time knowing that the grandfather’s time is already measured. “Pray for a nice day tomorrow,” we say casually, as if the local meteorologist doesn’t already know whether tomorrow it will rain or snow. “Dear God, please make Tom call, or the letter come, or the red light on the next corner turn green,” we

recite with a kind of Christian piety that smacks more of our own desire to run the world than it does to trust the God who entrusted it to us.

Too often, we use prayer to forgive ourselves for being less than we are meant to be. Too often, “I’m praying for it” means that I don’t intend to do anything else but pray that someone else will do for us what we should be doing for ourselves.

But the situation is obvious. There is nothing done by humans that humans cannot undo. There is no reason to deny our own responsibility to get it done by foisting it on God. We must get up and do it ourselves. . . .

The truth is that we must pray for the strength to do what we are meant to do. We must pray for the courage to meet the challenges of life. We must pray for the endurance it will take to go on even when nothing changes. We must pray that the spirit of God is with us as we do what must be done, whether we succeed in the process or not.

----- Sr. Joan Chittister, *The Breath of the Soul*

*Joan Chittister, OSB, is the author of numerous books, an international lecturer, and a leading voice in spirituality.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 11

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

In the LORD I have taken refuge.  
How can you say to my soul,  
“Fly like a bird to the mountain!

“Look, the wicked are bending their bow!  
They are fixing their arrow on the string,  
to shoot the upright of heart in the dark.  
Foundations once destroyed,  
what can the righteous do?”

The LORD is in his holy temple;  
in heaven is the throne of the LORD,  
whose eyes behold the world,  
whose gaze inspects the human race.

The LORD inspects the righteous and the wicked,  
and hates the lover of violence,  
sending fire and brimstone on the wicked,  
a scorching wind to fill their cup.  
For the LORD is righteous and loves righteous deeds;  
the upright shall behold the face of God.

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Acts 3:1-8

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple area for the three o'clock hour of prayer. And a man crippled from birth was carried and placed at the gate of the temple called “the Beautiful Gate” every day to beg for alms from the people who entered the temple. When he saw Peter

and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. But Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. Peter said, "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk." Then Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles grew strong. He leaped up, stood, and walked around, and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Rise, take up your mat, and walk.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

All-powerful and all-knowing God, you keep a loving eye on all you have created. Secure in your love we pray:

**R.** Strengthen our hearts, O God.

Deepen respect and unity among communities who experience trial and disagreement. **R.**

Inspire spiritual writers, Scripture scholars, and translators of your word. **R.**

Calm those who are anxious, and give peace to the dying. **R.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with peace and, at the hour of our death, lead us to behold God's face. Amen.

Wednesday, March 25

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 138:1-3, 6-8

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;  
 you have heard the words of my mouth.  
 In the presence of the angels I praise you.  
 I bow down toward your holy temple.

I give thanks to your name  
 for you have exalted over all  
 your name and your promise.  
 On the day I called, you answered me;  
 you increased the strength of my soul.

The LORD is high, yet looks on the lowly,  
 and the haughty God knows from afar.  
 You give me life though I walk amid affliction;  
 you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes.

With your right hand you save me;  
 the LORD will accomplish this for me.  
 O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;  
 discard not the work of your hands.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Zephaniah 3:14, 15b-18a

**S**hout for joy, daughter Zion! / sing joyfully, Israel! / Be  
 glad and exult with all your heart, / daughter Jeru-



salem! / The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst, / you have no further misfortune to fear. / On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem: / Do not fear, Zion, / do not be discouraged! / The LORD, your God, is in your midst, / a mighty savior, / Who will rejoice over you with gladness, / and renew you in his love, / Who will sing joyfully because of you, / as on festival days.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

You will conceive and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Saving God, Mary's yes is our source of redemption. In faith we pray: **R7.** Help us to say yes to you, O God.

Renew us in our fidelity to live as disciples in the single, married, religious, or ordained vocation. **R7.**

Make us mindful of ways in which we may help pregnant women and mothers of young children. **R7.**

Let your Church proclaim joyfully the greatness of your love. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with songs of praise and thanksgiving for all the good God has done for us. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Johan van Hulst

Righteous Among the Nations (1911–2018)

In 1943, during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, Jewish families who had received deportation orders were housed in a theater in Amsterdam. Children were separated from their families and housed in a nearby Jewish nursery run by Henriette Pimentel. Behind the nursery was a garden, separated only by a hedge from the Reformed Teachers' Training College, a Protestant school directed by Johan van Hulst. Working with Pimentel and members of the Dutch Resistance, Hulst arranged for children, ranging in age from infants to 12-year-olds, to be snuck into his school and hidden until they could be smuggled to the countryside. Altogether he is credited with rescuing as many as 600 children.

The dangers of the work were obvious. It was impossible to save all the children. The most difficult task was selecting as many as they could without attracting attention, knowing that the rest faced certain death. When Pimentel was arrested and the nursery was slated to be closed, Hulst was asked how many more he could accept. He took 12. "That was the most difficult day of my life," he said. "Later on, I asked myself, 'Why not 13?'"

Hulst spent the last months of the war in hiding. Yet he survived and went on to serve in the Dutch Senate. In 1972 in a ceremony in Israel he was added to the list of Righteous Among the Nations—gentiles who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. He died on March 22, 2018, at the age of 107.

*"I was at the center of a particular activity. It's not about me. I don't want to put myself in the foreground or play Resistance hero. All I really think about is the things I couldn't do—the few thousand children I wasn't able to save."*

—Johan van Hulst

# Mass

## *The Annunciation of the Lord, Solemnity*

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Hebrews 10:5, 7

The Lord said, as he entered the world: / Behold, I come to do your will, O God.

### GLORIA (p. 336)

### COLLECT

O God, who willed that your Word should take on the reality of human flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary, grant, we pray, that we, who confess our Redeemer to be God and man, may merit to become partakers even in his divine nature. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10

*Behold, the virgin shall conceive.*

**T**he LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying: Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as the nether world, or high as the sky! But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!" Then Isaiah said: Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us!"

The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11

**R<sub>7</sub>.** (8a and 9a) Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Sacrifice or oblation you wished not,  
 but ears open to obedience you gave me.  
 Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;  
 then said I, "Behold I come." **R<sub>7</sub>.**

"In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,  
 To do your will, O my God, is my delight,  
 and your law is within my heart!" **R<sub>7</sub>.**

I announced your justice in the vast assembly;  
 I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know. **R<sub>7</sub>.**

Your justice I kept not hid within my heart;  
 your faithfulness and your salvation I have spoken of;  
 I have made no secret of your kindness and your truth  
 in the vast assembly. **R<sub>7</sub>.**

## A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

10:4-10

*As is written of me in the scroll, behold, I come to do your will,  
 O God.*

**B**rothers and sisters: It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats takes away sins. For this reason, when Christ came into the world, he said: / "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, / but a body you prepared for me; / in holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight. / Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, / behold, I come to do your will, O God.'" / First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in." These are offered according to the law. Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will." He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 1:14ab

The Word of God became flesh and made his dwelling  
among us;  
and we saw his glory.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 1:26-38

*Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son.*

**T**he angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

CREED (p. 337)

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, almighty God,  
to accept your Church's offering,  
so that she, who is aware that her beginnings  
lie in the Incarnation of your Only Begotten Son,  
may rejoice to celebrate his mysteries on this Solemnity.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Isaiah 7:14

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; / and his  
name will be called Emmanuel.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Confirm in our minds the mysteries of the true faith,  
we pray, O Lord,  
so that, confessing that he who was conceived of the  
Virgin Mary  
is true God and true man,  
we may, through the saving power of his Resurrection,  
merit to attain eternal joy.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### The Call of a Prophet

Like some Catholics of my generation, I grew up with mixed feelings about the Virgin Mary. My mother, a strong feminist, believed that the image of a submissive Mary had often been used, in the harsh words of the writer Mary Gordon, "as a stick with which to beat independent women." My grandmother used to surreptitiously send me rosaries in the mail,

but the growing collection hung unused and dusty from my desk lamp.

It wasn't until later in life that I discovered there is more to Mary than the blue-robed Caucasian of millions of holy cards. Catholic theologian Elizabeth Johnson has spoken powerfully of Mary of Nazareth as a Jewish village woman of faith and a "friend of God and prophet."

The story of the Annunciation has deep parallels with the calls of the Old Testament prophets. Like Moses, Mary is visited by an "angel of the Lord." Like Isaiah, she is given a commission. Like Jeremiah, she questions whether she is the proper one for this task. Like Ezekiel, she is reassured. When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, she offers her Magnificat, a prophetic hymn of praise to a God who is close to the poor and oppressed.

In recent years I've returned to the rosary. I find that meditating on the mysteries brings me closer to Mary and her son Jesus. In darker moments, I pray for her prophetic courage. I ask her to give me the strength to say, as she said, "May it be done to me according to your word."

J. Peter Nixon

*J. Peter Nixon is a regular contributor to Give Us This Day. He holds a master's degree in theology from the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 87

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Founded by God on the holy mountain,  
the LORD loves the gates of Zion,  
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.  
Of you are told glorious things,  
you, O city of God!

“Rahab and Babylon I will count  
among those who know me;  
Of Tyre, Philistia, Ethiopia, it is told,  
‘There was this one born.’  
But of Zion it shall be said,  
‘Each one was born in her.’”

God, the Most High, will establish her.  
In the register of peoples the LORD writes,  
“Here was this one born.”  
The singers cry out in chorus,  
“All my wellsprings are in you.”

Glory to the Father . . .

### SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 1:11-14

In [Christ] we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of his will, so that we might exist



for the praise of his glory, we who first hoped in Christ. In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised holy Spirit, which is the first installment of our inheritance toward redemption as God's possession, to the praise of his glory.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

May the eyes of our hearts be enlightened to know the hope to which we are called.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God Most High, we echo Mary's words and pray in faith:  
**R7.** Your will be done, O God.

Let your Church be a witness to your love, justice, and peace. **R7.**

Keep vigil with those who wait for an organ transplant. **R7.**

Seal all believers with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts, and may the love of Christ be the foundation of our lives. Amen.

Thursday, March 26

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 86:11-17

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Teach me, O LORD, your way,  
so that I may walk in your truth,  
single-heartedly revering your name.

I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart,  
and glorify your name forever.  
Your faithful love to me has been great;  
you have saved me from the depths of Sheol.

The proud have risen against me, O God;  
a band of the ruthless seeks my life.  
To you they pay no heed.

But you, O God, are compassionate and gracious,  
slow to anger, O Lord,  
abundant in love and fidelity;  
turn and take pity on me.

O give your strength to your servant,  
and save the child of your handmaid.  
Show me the sign of your favor,  
that my foes may see to their shame  
that you, O LORD, give me comfort and help.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Numbers 14:13-14a, 15-16, 19

Moses said to the LORD: “The Egyptians will hear of this,  
for by your power you brought out this people from

among them. They will tell the inhabitants of this land, who have heard that you, LORD, are in the midst of this people! If now you slay this people all at once, the nations who have heard such reports of you will say, ‘The LORD was not able to bring this people into the land he swore to give them; that is why he slaughtered them in the wilderness.’ Pardon, then, the iniquity of this people in keeping with your great kindness, even as you have forgiven them from Egypt until now.”

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in kindness.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Compassionate and gracious God, you are slow to anger and ever faithful. In hope we pray: **R7.** Teach us your ways, O God.

Make your Church a place of welcome, hospitality, and forgiveness for all people. **R7.**

Move us to compassion for the weaknesses and wounds that others bear. **R7.**

Help us to listen with the ear of our heart and to speak the truth with courage and love. **R7.**

**Our Father . . .**

May God bless us with peace and guide us along the path of truth so that our lives may always give glory to God, through Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Walter Hilton

Mystic (ca. 1343–1396)

Fourteenth-century England saw a great flourishing of Christian mysticism. Walter Hilton is among the company that included Richard Rolle, the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing*, and Julian of Norwich. We know a great deal about that period, a time of plague, famine, peasant uprisings, and populist challenges to Church authority. But of Hilton's life we know very little. There is evidence that he was trained in canon law and spent time as a solitary before entering an Augustinian priory in Nottinghamshire, where he spent the rest of his life.

Hilton wrote a number of spiritual treatises, of which the best known is his "Ladder of Perfection," a handbook on the path to holiness. For Hilton, the spiritual life is not a matter of professing the faith, or living in a particular manner, but a process of steady ascent toward "contemplation in perfect love of God." This path, hastened by love and humility, leads through a dark night and the withdrawing of the soul from worldly values so that one may "see and feel Jesus and spiritual things." Eventually, the goal is to see Christ working in all things.

Hilton made use of many biblical parables to illustrate his points. For instance, just as a woman sweeps her room in search of a missing coin, so we must cleanse our hearts of worldly attachments. Considering the story of Jesus sleeping in the boat during a storm, he observes: "Jesus sleeps spiritually in your heart as He once did in the body . . . rouse Him by prayer and waken Him with the cry of your desire."

Walter Hilton died on March 24, 1396. His death is commemorated by the Church of England on that date.

*"When you attack the roots of sin, fix your thought more on the God you desire than on the sin you abhor."* —Walter Hilton

# Mass

*Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 105 (104):3-4

Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice; / turn to the  
Lord and his strength; / constantly seek his face.

COLLECT

We invoke your mercy in humble prayer, O Lord,  
that you may cause us, your servants,  
corrected by penance and schooled by good works,  
to persevere sincerely in your commands  
and come safely to the paschal festivities.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Exodus

32:7-14

*Relent in punishing your people.*

**T**he LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once to your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, for they have become depraved. They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them, making for themselves a molten calf and worshipping it, sacrificing to it and crying out, ‘This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!’” The LORD said to Moses, “I see how stiff-necked this people is. Let me alone, then, that my wrath may blaze up against them to consume them. Then I will make of you a great nation.”

But Moses implored the LORD, his God, saying, “Why, O LORD, should your wrath blaze up against your own people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with such great power and with so strong a hand? Why should the Egyptians

say, ‘With evil intent he brought them out, that he might kill them in the mountains and exterminate them from the face of the earth?’ Let your blazing wrath die down; relent in punishing your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and how you swore to them by your own self, saying, ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky; and all this land that I promised, I will give your descendants as their perpetual heritage.’” So the LORD relented in the punishment he had threatened to inflict on his people.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

106:19-20, 21-22, 23

**R7.** (4a) Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.

Our fathers made a calf in Horeb  
and adored a molten image;  
They exchanged their glory  
for the image of a grass-eating bullock. **R7.**

They forgot the God who had saved them,  
who had done great deeds in Egypt,  
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,  
terrible things at the Red Sea. **R7.**

Then he spoke of exterminating them,  
but Moses, his chosen one,  
Withstood him in the breach  
to turn back his destructive wrath. **R7.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 3:16

God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 5:31-47**

*The one who will accuse you is Moses,  
in whom you have placed your hope.*

**J**esus said to the Jews: “If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is not true. But there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true. You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth. I do not accept human testimony, but I say this so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light. But I have testimony greater than John’s. The works that the Father gave me to accomplish, these works that I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf. But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form, and you do not have his word remaining in you, because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures, because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf. But you do not want to come to me to have life.

“I do not accept human praise; moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I came in the name of my Father, but you do not accept me; yet if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father: the one who will accuse you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that what we offer in sacrifice  
may cleanse us in our frailty from every evil  
and always grant us your protection.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Jeremiah 31:33**

I will place my law within them, and I will write it upon  
their hearts; / and I will be their God, and they shall be  
my people, says the Lord.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May this Sacrament we have received purify us, we pray,  
O Lord,  
and grant your servants freedom from all blame,  
that those bound by a guilty conscience  
may glory in the fullness of heavenly remedy.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## *Reflection*

### **Longings of the Spirit**

Sometimes Scripture makes for hard reading. We don't want to imagine God's wrath blazing up to annihilate us—the very threat given to the Israelites in today's passage from Exodus. Far more palatable is the God who leads the Israelites out of captivity, who provides manna in the desert.

The Gospel is similarly hard to hear. Jesus accuses, "You do not want to come to me to have life. . . . You do not have



the love of God in you.” We prefer the Jesus who says, “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

So what are we to draw from these two passages? It is perhaps the message of humility that we find in the Rule of St. Benedict (chap. 7). St. Benedict envisioned the spiritual path as a ladder that we ascend as we progress in the practice of humility. When we give into hubris, we falter and descend into a trough of egotism that cannot satisfy the longings of the spirit. St. Benedict points to reverence—or the awe of God—as the fundamental first rung on the ladder of humility. It is the first step on the path to spiritual growth. It means recognizing that “God is God, and we are not.”

Today’s readings remind us that our actions eventually do have consequences. The passage from Exodus warns us not to give in to false gods. In today’s world, those “false gods” might take the form of overwork, greed, xenophobia, self-centeredness, or a lack of compassion for the less fortunate. John’s Gospel points us to Jesus’ words and his works. That is, how Jesus fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowing, reached out to the marginalized, and healed the afflicted.

As we enter the final weeks of Lent, are we climbing the ladder of humility? Are we keeping daily before us the reverence of God? How are we emulating Jesus’ words and works?

Judith Valente

*Judith Valente is the author of* How to Live: What the Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us About Happiness, Meaning, and Community. *Read some of her additional reflections at* [www.judithvalente.com](http://www.judithvalente.com).

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 89:20-28

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

Then you spoke in a vision,  
To your faithful ones you said,  
“I have bestowed my help on a warrior,  
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

“I have found my servant David,  
and with my holy oil anointed him.  
My hand shall always be with him,  
and my arm shall make him strong.

“The enemy shall never outwit him,  
nor shall the son of iniquity humble him.  
I will beat down his foes before him,  
and those who hate him I will strike.

“My love and my faithfulness shall be with him;  
by my name his might shall be exalted.  
I will stretch out his hand to the Sea,  
and his right hand upon the Rivers.

“He will call out to me, ‘You are my father,  
my God, the rock of my salvation.’  
I for my part will make him my firstborn,  
the highest of the kings of the earth.”

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 15:13-17

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised,

then empty [too] is our preaching; empty, too, your faith. Then we are also false witnesses to God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The Father who sent me has testified on my behalf.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Forgiving God, in Jesus you lead us in the ways of peace. In faith we pray: **R7.** Ever-living God, hear our prayer.

Foster a spirit of respect, cooperation, and compassionate service among elected officials. **R7.**

Nurture a spirit of generosity, trust, and respect among Christians. **R7.**

Animate a spirit of reverence, understanding, and appreciation among people of different faith traditions. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May the spirit of God's peace rest upon us and remain with us forever. Amen.

Friday, March 27

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 88:10b-19

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I call to you, LORD, all day long;  
to you I stretch out my hands.

Will you work your wonders for the dead?  
Will the shades rise up to praise you?  
From the grave, who can tell of your love?  
From the place of perdition your faithfulness?  
Will your wonders be known in the dark,  
in the land of oblivion your righteousness?

But I, O LORD, cry out to you;  
in the morning my prayer comes before you.  
Why do you reject me, O LORD?  
Why do you hide your face from me?

I am wretched, close to death from my youth.  
I have borne your trials; I am numb.  
Your fury has swept down upon me;  
your terrors have utterly destroyed me.

They surround me all the day like a flood;  
together they close in against me.  
Friend and neighbor you have taken away:  
my one companion is darkness.

Glory to the Father . . .

## SCRIPTURE

Genesis 37:17b-20, 23-24a

Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. They saw him from a distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. They said to one another: “Here comes that dreamer! Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the cisterns here; we could say that a wild beast devoured him. We will see then what comes of his dreams.”

So when Joseph came up to his brothers, they stripped him of his tunic, the long ornamented tunic he had on; then they took him and threw him into the cistern.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today’s Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

## ANTIPHON

If the righteous one is the son of God, God will help him.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

## INTERCESSIONS

Providing God, you are near to all who call out to you in faith. With trust we pray: **R**. Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide your Church at prayer, deepen in us a spirit of contemplation, and inspire us to embrace the poor with love. **R**.

Bless physicians, nurses, and health-care workers with patience, compassion, and counsel. **R**.

Comfort and console those who suffer from rejection, broken relationships, or trauma. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God inspire us to greater fidelity and bring all things to perfection in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Mothers of the Disappeared

Argentina (1977–1983)

Following a period of economic crisis and political instability in Argentina, many members of the middle class, including Church leaders, openly welcomed the military coup of March 24, 1976, hoping in the promise of stability and order. Few anticipated the savage repression that would follow.

In their “war against subversion” the military unleashed a reign of terror. But rather than fill stadiums and prisons with political prisoners, they perfected the tactic of kidnapping their victims, murdering them in secret, and disposing of their bodies. In this manner 20,000 men and women joined the *desaparecidos*—the “disappeared.”

The aim of this repression was to silence all protest, and it was largely successful. It fell to a group of women—the so-called Mothers of the Disappeared—to break this silence. In their grief they found each other. They began to offer a silent vigil in the Plaza de Mayo, the public square of Buenos Aires. They were called “crazy.” They were subjected to arrest and bullying. But they carried on. What gave them such courage? As one said, “When a woman gives birth to a child, she gives life and then at the same time, when they cut the cord, she gives freedom. We were fighting for life and for freedom.”

At a time when truth was everywhere suppressed, the Mothers became the conscience of the nation. They lived in hope of the day when the discredited military would be swept from power. That day came in 1983. But their missing children never returned.

*“When everyone was terrorized we didn’t stay at home crying—we went to the streets. We were mad, but it was the only way to stay sane.”*

—One of the Mothers of the Disappeared

# Mass

*Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 54 (53):3-4

O God, save me by your name; / by your power, defend my cause. / O God, hear my prayer; / give ear to the words of my mouth.

COLLECT

O God, who have prepared fitting helps for us in our weakness, grant, we pray, that we may receive their healing effects with joy and reflect them in a holy way of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

2:1a, 12-22

*Let us condemn him to a shameful death.*

**T**he wicked said among themselves, / thinking not aright: / “Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; / he sets himself against our doings, / Reproaches us for transgressions of the law / and charges us with violations of our training. / He professes to have knowledge of God / and styles himself a child of the LORD. / To us he is the censure of our thoughts; / merely to see him is a hardship for us, / Because his life is not like that of others, / and different are his ways. / He judges us debased; / he holds aloof from our paths as from things impure. / He calls blest the destiny of the just / and boasts that God is his Father. / Let us see whether his words be true; / let us find out what will happen to him. / For if the just one be the son

of God, he will defend him / and deliver him from the hand of his foes. / With revilement and torture let us put him to the test / that we may have proof of his gentleness / and try his patience. / Let us condemn him to a shameful death; / for according to his own words, God will take care of him.” / These were their thoughts, but they erred; / for their wickedness blinded them, / and they knew not the hidden counsels of God; / neither did they count on a recompense of holiness / nor discern the innocent souls’ reward.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23

**R.** (19a) **The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.**

The LORD confronts the evildoers,  
to destroy remembrance of them from the earth.  
When the just cry out, the LORD hears them,  
and from all their distress he rescues them. **R.**

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted;  
and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.  
Many are the troubles of the just man,  
but out of them all the LORD delivers him. **R.**

He watches over all his bones;  
not one of them shall be broken.  
The LORD redeems the lives of his servants;  
no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 4:4b

One does not live on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.



## A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

7:1-2, 10, 25-30

*They tried to arrest him, but his hour had not yet come.*

Jesus moved about within Galilee; he did not wish to travel in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill him. But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near.

But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but as it were in secret.

Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Christ? But we know where he is from. When the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from." So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me." So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.

The Gospel of the Lord.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this sacrifice, almighty God,  
cleanse us by its mighty power  
and lead us to approach its source  
with ever greater purity.

Through Christ our Lord.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Ephesians 1:7

In Christ, we have redemption by his Blood, / and  
forgiveness of our sins, / in accord with the riches of  
his grace.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that, as we pass from old to new,  
so, with former ways left behind,  
we may be renewed in holiness of mind.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### A Greater One Must Come

I, Who had My Son in My heart, willed him to be incarnate of the Virgin to save the lives of those who believe. But if I had given Him a physical father, who would He be then? Not My Son, but My servant; and that could not be. He, born of the Virgin, ate, drank, lay down to sleep and experienced bodily miseries, but He never felt the taste of sin in His flesh, for He had assumed flesh not through a lie but through truth. What does this mean? Other people, because of Adam and Eve's transgression, are born from the taste of delight, which is to say through a lie and not the truth. But My Son did not originate so, but was born in sanctity from the most chaste Virgin to redeem humanity. For like cannot loose like from a chain; a greater one must come who can save him. . . . Therefore My Son came, without sin; He conquered death and mercifully delivered humanity therefrom.

But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.

St. Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*

*Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) was a German Benedictine abbess and foundress of monasteries, musician and composer, poet and prophet, pharmacist and doctor. She was declared a Doctor of the Church in 2012.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 85:9-14

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

I will hear what the LORD God speaks,  
who speaks of peace to his faithful people,  
and those who turn to God in their hearts.  
For those who fear God, salvation is near,  
and the Lord's glory will dwell in our land.

Merciful love and faithfulness have met;  
righteousness and peace have kissed.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth,  
and righteousness look down from heaven.

Also the LORD will bestow a great bounty,  
and our earth shall yield its increase.  
Righteousness will march as a vanguard,  
and guide God's steps on the way.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 1:15-18

I, too, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and of your love for all the holy ones, do not cease giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of [your] hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

Jesus came that we might know the Father.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Healing God, you speak peace to faithful people. In hope we pray: **R**. Guide our steps, O God.

Transform our hearts, and make us instruments of your peace. **R**.

Help your Church to listen to the cries of the earth and the poor and respond with generous love. **R**.

Reconcile families and communities that are estranged from one another. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God enlighten our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we may know the hope that belongs to God's call and the riches of glory in Christ's inheritance among the holy ones. Amen.

Saturday, March 28

## *Morning*

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 72:1-4, 12-14, 17

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O God, give your judgment to the king,  
to a king's son your righteousness,  
that he may judge your people in righteousness,  
and your poor in right judgment.

May the mountains bring forth peace for the people,  
and the hills bear peace in righteousness.  
May he defend the poor of the people,  
and save the children of the needy,  
and crush the oppressor.

For he shall rescue the needy when they cry,  
the poor who have no one to help.  
He will have pity on the weak and the needy,  
and save the lives of the needy.  
From oppression and violence he redeems their life;  
to him their blood is dear.

May his name endure forever,  
his name continue like the sun.  
Every tribe shall be blest in him,  
all nations shall call him blessed.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Job 14:7-10

**F**or a tree there is hope; / if it is cut down, it will sprout again, / its tender shoots will not cease. / Even though its root grow old in the earth / and its stump die in the dust, / Yet at the first whiff of water it sprouts / and puts forth branches like a young plant. / But when a man dies, all vigor leaves him; / when a mortal expires, where then is he?

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

To you, O Lord, I have entrusted my cause.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Compassionate God, you take pity on the weak and the needy. In Jesus' name we pray to you: **R<sub>7</sub>**. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Instill a spirit of joy and appreciation between family members, classmates, and teammates. **R<sub>7</sub>**.

Grant safety to men, women, and youth in their schools and places of work. **R<sub>7</sub>**.

Help us to ensure just wages, insurance, and health care for all people. **R<sub>7</sub>**.

Our Father . . .

May God strengthen us in faith, nurture us in hope, and abide with us in love, through Jesus our Savior and brother. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### Maria von Trapp

Matriarch of the Trapp Family Singers (1905–1987)

Maria Kutschera, who was orphaned at seven, grew up with no interest in religion; for the “holy water girls” in her class, she felt only scorn. Yet, while studying to be a teacher, she stepped into a church one Palm Sunday and heard a sermon that changed her life. Opening her heart to God, she decided at once to become a nun.

In 1924 she entered Nonnberg Abbey, where, despite her good intentions, her lively personality raised eyebrows. Frequently she was reminded not to whistle in the cloister, or slide down banisters, or skip up the stairs. In 1926 the mother superior tested her vocation by sending her to serve a spell as tutor to one of the seven children of a widowed naval commander, Georg von Trapp. In time, and with the blessing of her abbess, she left the convent, married Georg, and bore three additional children.

Their story inspired the popular musical *The Sound of Music*—though with some poetic license. Yes, they fled Nazi rule in Austria, but there was no climb over the Alps; instead, a train to Italy and a boat to America. Maria consoled the children by recalling the Holy Family’s flight from Herod to Egypt. After that, she felt that “Jesus was a member of the family.” After Georg’s death, Maria and three of her children became missionaries in Papua New Guinea. She died in Vermont on March 28, 1987.

*“It will be very interesting one day to follow the pattern of our life as it is spread out like a beautiful tapestry. . . . In looking back we can discover how a red thread goes through the pattern of our life: the Will of God.”*

—Maria von Trapp

# Mass

*Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 18 (17):5, 7

The waves of death rose about me; / the pains of the netherworld surrounded me. / In my anguish I called to the Lord, / and from his holy temple he heard my voice.

COLLECT

May the working of your mercy, O Lord, we pray,  
direct our hearts aright,  
for without your grace

we cannot find favor in your sight.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 11:18-20

*I am like a trusting lamb led to slaughter.*

I knew their plot because the LORD informed me; / at that time you, O LORD, showed me their doings.

Yet I, like a trusting lamb led to slaughter, / had not realized that they were hatching plots against me: / “Let us destroy the tree in its vigor; / let us cut him off from the land of the living, / so that his name will be spoken no more.”

But, you, O LORD of hosts, O just Judge, / searcher of mind and heart, / Let me witness the vengeance you take on them, / for to you I have entrusted my cause!

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12

**R.** (2a) O Lord, my God, in you I take refuge.

O LORD, my God, in you I take refuge;  
save me from all my pursuers and rescue me,



Lest I become like the lion's prey,  
to be torn to pieces, with no one to rescue me. **R7.**

Do me justice, O LORD, because I am just,  
and because of the innocence that is mine.  
Let the malice of the wicked come to an end,  
but sustain the just,  
O searcher of heart and soul, O just God. **R7.**

A shield before me is God,  
who saves the upright of heart;  
A just judge is God,  
a God who punishes day by day. **R7.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

See Luke 8:15

Blessed are they who have kept the word with a  
generous heart  
and yield a harvest through perseverance.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 7:40-53

*The Christ will not come from Galilee, will he?*

Some in the crowd who heard these words of Jesus said, "This is truly the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But others said, "The Christ will not come from Galilee, will he? Does not Scripture say that the Christ will be of David's family and come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" So a division occurred in the crowd because of him. Some of them even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

So the guards went to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?" The guards answered, "Never before has anyone spoken like this man." So the Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, which does not know the law, is accursed."

Nicodemus, one of their members who had come to him earlier, said to them, “Does our law condemn a man before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?” They answered and said to him, “You are not from Galilee also, are you? Look and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”

Then each went to his own house.

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, we pray,  
with these oblations you receive from our hands,  
and, even when our wills are defiant,  
constrain them mercifully to turn to you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. 1 Peter 1:18-19

By the precious Blood of Christ, / the Blood of a spotless  
and unblemished Lamb, / we have been redeemed.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May your holy gifts purify us, O Lord, we pray,  
and by their working render us fully pleasing to you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Context Is Everything

“Let me witness the vengeance you take on them!” the prophet Jeremiah rages. I admit to squirming at his wrath and wanting to withdraw from it.

The very idea of asking God to do violence to others should make us uncomfortable. After all, Jesus, the Son of God, refused to take vengeance on his torturers.

But how can we come to terms with the fact that our holiest of books makes us, at times, recoil? In his book *A God of Vengeance?* Fr. Erich Zenger says that when we read the psalms of violence or prophetic prayers for vengeance, we must remember who uttered them. It was not those in positions of economic or military or political privilege who begged for just judgment. Rather, it was the poorest of the poor, the disempowered and oppressed. It was not, in other words, those with the power to inflict such violence but those who had no one to turn to but God.

As it was then, so it is today. Read these difficult biblical texts from within the context of parents and children who are separated at the border, or from the perspective of communities ravaged by our recent opioid crisis. Such perspectives can awaken in us an awareness of, and a repugnance for, the web of real violence within which so many are forced to live. It can rouse our own anger.

And this changes the tone of Jeremiah's words. It helps us see that it is not wrath that lies within them but pain—and the painful incapacity to unbind the structures of injustice that wrack the lives of the poor. Hearing Jeremiah in this way, as the voice of the voiceless, not only awakens our hearts but also calls us to respond. To imitate that other Prophet, the one who came to announce liberty to the captives and good news to the poor.

Fr. Paddy Gilger

*Patrick Gilger, SJ, a Jesuit priest, is a contributing editor at America Media and a fellow at Public Seminar. He is currently pursuing a PhD in sociology at the New School for Social Research.*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

### PSALM 110

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

The LORD's revelation to my lord:  
"Sit at my right hand,  
until I make your foes your footstool."

The LORD will send from Zion  
your scepter of power:  
rule in the midst of your foes.

With you is princely rule  
on the day of your power.  
In holy splendor, from the womb before the dawn,  
I have begotten you.

The LORD has sworn an oath he will not change:  
"You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek."

The Lord at your right hand  
shatters rulers on the day of God's wrath.

The Lord brings a judgment on the nations,  
and heaps the bodies high,  
and shatters heads throughout the wide earth.

He shall drink from the stream by the wayside,  
and therefore he shall lift up his head.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 4:6-8

I am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

The Lord, the just judge, searches minds and hearts.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Giver of every gift, you lavish us with plenty and bid us to care for the less fortunate. In faith we pray: **R**. Expand our hearts in your love, O God.

Help us to bless those who find it difficult to be kind. **R**.

Strengthen us to forgive one another. **R**.

Sensitize us to the needs of women and men recently released from prison. **R**.

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with peace and draw us into unity through Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Sunday, March 29

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 96:1-9

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

O sing a new song to the LORD;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.  
O sing to the LORD; bless God's name.  
Proclaim divine salvation day by day.  
Tell among the nations God's glory,  
divine wonders among all the peoples.

For the LORD is great and highly to be praised,  
to be feared above all gods.  
For the idols of the nations are naught.  
It was the LORD who made the heavens.  
Greatness and splendor abound in God's presence,  
strength and honor in the holy place.

Ascribe to the LORD, you families of peoples,  
Ascribe to the LORD glory and power;  
Ascribe to the LORD the glory of God's name.

Bring an offering and enter God's courts;  
worship the LORD in holy splendor.  
O tremble before God, all the earth.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Kings 4:32b-37

**E**lisha] found the boy dead, lying on the bed. He went in, closed the door on them both, and prayed to the LORD. Then he lay upon the child on the bed, placing his

mouth upon the child's mouth, his eyes upon the eyes, and his hands upon the hands. As Elisha stretched himself over the child, the boy's flesh became warm. He arose, paced up and down the room, and then once more stretched himself over him, and the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite." He called her, and she came to him, and Elisha said to her, "Take your son." She came in and fell at his feet in homage; then she took her son and left.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of salvation, majesty and splendor abound in your presence. In awe we pray: **R7.** Let all the earth rejoice in your saving help, O God.

You answer the pleas of the faithful: heal those who have been abused by Church officials, and make your Church a sign of your reconciling love. **R7.**

You judge the world with justice: uncover deceitful and unjust practices that exploit the poor. **R7.**

You govern the peoples with your truth: clothe our civil and religious leaders with integrity, honesty, and humble service. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God heal us of every sin and illness, bless us with peace, and raise us to everlasting life. Amen.



# Mass

*Fifth Sunday of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 43 (42):1-2

Give me justice, O God, / and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. / From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, / for you, O God, are my strength.

(The Gloria is omitted.)

COLLECT

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel 37:12-14

*I will put my spirit in you that you may live.*

**T**hus says the Lord GOD: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus you shall know that I am the LORD. I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

**R.** (7) **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

LORD, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to my voice in supplication. **R.**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,

LORD, who can stand?

But with you is forgiveness,

that you may be revered. **R.**

I trust in the LORD;

my soul trusts in his word.

More than sentinels wait for the dawn,

let Israel wait for the LORD. **R.**

For with the LORD is kindness

and with him is plenteous redemption;

and he will redeem Israel

from all their iniquities. **R.**

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

8:8-11

*The Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.*

**B**rothers and sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will

give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 11:25a, 26

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;  
whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

11:1-45 (Shorter Form [ ], 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45)

*I am the resurrection and the life.*

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So [the sisters of Lazarus sent word to Jesus saying, “Master, the one you love is ill.” When Jesus heard this he said, “This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”] The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” He said this, and then told them, “Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him.” So the disciples said to him, “Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved.” But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, “Lazarus has died. And I am

glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him."

[When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.] Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. [When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."]

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, [he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Could

not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?"

So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.]

The Gospel of the Lord.

CREED (p. 337)

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Hear us, almighty God,  
and, having instilled in your servants  
the teachings of the Christian faith,  
graciously purify them  
by the working of this sacrifice.  
Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. John 11:26

Everyone who lives and believes in me / will not die for  
ever, says the Lord.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We pray, almighty God,  
that we may always be counted among the members  
of Christ,  
in whose Body and Blood we have communion.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

## Reflection

### The Shock of Freedom

Between August 2016 and June 2017 I was treated for cancer with surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. I entered that time as if it were a pilgrimage, guided by the adage that “the Camino gives you what you need, not what you want.” Some days were good, some not so good, but over all I did really well. So, though I had been told it was normal, I was surprised to feel mildly depressed after the final radiation treatment.

I thought a lot about Lazarus during the months before I felt restored to life. What was it like for him to be dead and suddenly find himself alive? How did it feel to emerge from the tomb, his burial bands thrown aside, his face uncovered? He was naked as a newborn, all his senses on heightened alert. He must have smelled the stench Martha worried about. His eyes once again gazed at his loving sisters and his beloved friend Jesus.

Most people have experiences that hint at what Lazarus knew. Like me, it might have been cancer or another serious physical illness. People trapped in a cycle of addiction, treatment, and relapse know it. Their families know it even more. And anyone who has experienced the mercy of the confessional knows the shock of freedom that forgiveness bestows.

Sometimes, in our panic and fear, we cry out like Mary did, “Lord, if you had been here . . .” But Jesus is always with us, and he always acts “for the glory of God”—sometimes when we want it, but always when we need it.

Rachelle Linner

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## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

PSALM 24:1-6

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

The LORD's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world, and those who dwell in it.  
It is the Lord who set it on the seas,  
and made it firm on the rivers.

Who shall climb the mountain of the LORD?  
Who shall stand in God's holy place?  
The clean of hands and pure of heart,  
whose souls are not set on vain things,  
who have not sworn deceitful words.

Blessings from the LORD shall they receive,  
and right reward from the God who saves them.  
Such are the people who seek the Lord,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

1 John 5:9-12

If we accept human testimony, the testimony of God is surely greater. Now the testimony of God is this, that he has testified on behalf of his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has this testimony within himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar by not believing the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the



testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever possesses the Son has life; whoever does not possess the Son of God does not have life.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will live.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Giver of eternal life, you bless and save those who seek you. In faith we pray: **R**. O God, hear our prayer.

Let your life-giving word bring hope to those whose lives are afflicted by poverty and violence. **R**.

Attend to the cries of parents with children who suffer disease, injury, malnourishment, or mental illness. **R**.

Transform the hearts of those who are imprisoned, instill kindness in their caretakers, and give peace to their loved ones. **R**.

**Our Father . . .**

May God receive our prayers with compassion and strengthen us for life in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

March 29–31

Fifth Week of Lent

## *Within the Word*

### **A Story for Anyone and Everyone**

The story of the woman caught in adultery resonates with us on many levels. For anyone accused of any wrongdoing, for anyone holding to a strict moral code, for women subjugated by patriarchy, Monday's Gospel salts any number of wounds.

The suddenness with which the scribes and Pharisees break into the scene unsettles a quiet moment of instruction; their emphasis on “the very act of committing adultery” underscores the immediacy of the deed. But it also raises questions: primarily, where is the accomplice in this adulterous act? According to the law, he should be put to death as well (Lev 20:10).

As John tells it, the accusers wanted to test Jesus so they could bring a charge against him. Is this scene then a premeditated set up? Did they induce the woman into a compromising situation? In the face of all this rapid-fire action, Jesus starts doodling in the sand, an absurd response to a situation laden with absurdities.

Some say that Jesus is writing the name of the woman's adulterous partner, but that explanation is too simplistic, and the rest of the action does not support it. With that puzzling action, nonetheless, Jesus turns the whole event on its head. John's audience knows the Scriptures that say God wrote the commandments on the stone tablets with his own finger (Exod 31:18 and Deut 9:10). With a legal question hanging in the background, the attention drawn to Jesus' writing finger asserts his own divine authority to inscribe the law, which he does with the third person imperative, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7).

Textual evidence shows that this story was most likely original to Luke's Gospel, with some ancient manuscripts

situating it after Luke 21:38 (just before the Passion). Later the narrative bounced around different places in John. Such instability is evidence that many found the account embarrassing, if not scandalous, spurring various editors to excise it from the text: If Jesus forgives an adulterous woman, how can a husband ensure his wife's fidelity? The Gospel tradition is too strong, however, and all attempts to remove the story failed; the passage has ended up in John.

While Jesus may stay the mob from stoning the woman, he also acknowledges that she has done wrong. His concluding comment, "Neither do I condemn you . . . do not sin any more," captures the essence of redemptive grace: not humiliation or shame but a challenge and impetus to repent and change. It is a lesson both to those who would make a public spectacle of someone's shortcomings as well as to those who do wrong.

But we are still left with the question: why do the authorities not drag the adulterer instead of the woman to Jesus, or at least along with her? The reason lies deeper than simply giving the unseen man a free pass. Rather, it reflects a systemic injustice inherent to the culture of that day and even beyond, which privileges some at the expense of others. This passage forces those of good will to examine their motives when called to address ethical, moral, and legal issues. Are we bullying someone? Are we advancing our own careers? Are we favoring punitive measures over restorative justice?

The crowd drops their stones and drifts away, dispersing with them their desire to entrap Jesus. Everyone is offered the opportunity to convert, including the reader.

—Fr. Michael Patella

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Monday, March 30

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 103:1-5, 11-14

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all within me, the holy name of God.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and never forget all God's benefits.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and compassion,  
who fills your life with good things,  
renewing your youth like an eagle's.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so strong the mercy for those who fear God.  
As far as the east is from the west,  
so far from us does God remove our transgressions.

As a father has compassion on his children,  
divine compassion is on those who fear the LORD,  
who knows of what we are made,  
who remembers that we are dust.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 19:15-19

One witness alone shall not stand against someone in regard to any crime or any offense that may have been

committed; a charge shall stand only on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

If a hostile witness rises against someone to accuse that person of wrongdoing, the two parties in the dispute shall appear in the presence of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and judges in office at that time, and the judges must investigate it thoroughly. If the witness is a false witness and has falsely accused the other, you shall do to the false witness just as that false witness planned to do to the other. Thus shall you purge the evil from your midst.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

Susanna was saved from the lies of false witnesses.

#### CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Loving God, you fill our life with good things. With grateful hearts we pray: **R7.** Show us mercy, O God.

Renew the spirits of those who are exhausted, discouraged, or troubled. **R7.**

Inspire efforts to cultivate cures and immunizations for contagious diseases. **R7.**

Sensitize us to the rhythms and patterns of the natural world, and kindle in us a deep care for all creation. **R7.**

**Our Father . . .**

May God lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, in Jesus our peace. Amen.

## Blessed Among Us

### St. John Climacus

Monk (Seventh Century)

St. John Climacus, a Byzantine monk, is remembered for having popularized the image of the ladder as a symbol of the spiritual life. His treatise, *The Ladder* [Greek = *Klimax*] *to Paradise*, became a classic work of monastic spirituality, and it also supplied the name by which he is remembered.

John was born in Palestine and entered the monastery on Mt. Sinai when he was sixteen. For forty years, from the age of thirty-five to seventy-five, he lived the solitary life of a hermit, before serving as abbot for the final four years of his life. John's great humility was a veil that disguised his ardent prayer and his many spiritual gifts. When his fellow monks once chided him for being too talkative, he resolved to maintain complete silence for an entire year.

In his famous book John outlined a sequence of thirty steps that begin with renunciation and ascend up the spiritual ladder to the perfection of faith, hope, and charity. Despite his desire for obscurity, his reputation for holiness extended far beyond the monastery. Even Pope St. Gregory the Great wrote to ask for his prayers.

His work inspired a famous icon that shows a group of monks climbing a ladder with Christ at the top, waiting to greet them. While angels urge them on, demons attempt to derail and pull them down. At the bottom of the icon, pointing to the ladder for his fellow monks, is St. John Climacus.

He is said to have died at the age of eighty. His feast is celebrated on March 30.

*“Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with your every breath, and you will then understand the meaning of stillness.”*

—St. John Climacus

# Mass

## Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent\*

\*The following readings may be used on any day this week, especially in Years B and C when the Gospel of Lazarus is not read on the Fifth Sunday of Lent: 2 Kgs 4:18b-21, 32-37; John 11:1-45.

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 56 (55):2

Have mercy on me, O God, for people assail me; / they fight me all day long and oppress me.

### COLLECT

O God, by whose wondrous grace we are enriched with every blessing, grant us so to pass from former ways to newness of life, that we may be made ready for the glory of the heavenly Kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

### A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

13:41c-62 (alt. 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62)

*Here I am about to die, though I have done none of the things charged against me.*

**T**he assembly condemned Susanna to death.

But Susanna cried aloud: "O eternal God, you know what is hidden and are aware of all things before they come to be: you know that they have testified falsely against me. Here I am about to die, though I have done none of the things with which these wicked men have charged me."

The Lord heard her prayer. As she was being led to execution, God stirred up the holy spirit of a young boy named Daniel, and he cried aloud: "I will have no part in the death

of this woman.” All the people turned and asked him, “What is this you are saying?” He stood in their midst and continued, “Are you such fools, O children of Israel! To condemn a woman of Israel without examination and without clear evidence? Return to court, for they have testified falsely against her.”

Then all the people returned in haste. To Daniel the elders said, “Come, sit with us and inform us, since God has given you the prestige of old age.” But he replied, “Separate these two far from each other that I may examine them.”

After they were separated one from the other, he called one of them and said: “How you have grown evil with age! Now have your past sins come to term: passing unjust sentences, condemning the innocent, and freeing the guilty, although the Lord says, ‘The innocent and the just you shall not put to death.’ Now, then, if you were a witness, tell me under what tree you saw them together.” “Under a mastic tree,” he answered. Daniel replied, “Your fine lie has cost you your head, for the angel of God shall receive the sentence from him and split you in two.” Putting him to one side, he ordered the other one to be brought. Daniel said to him, “Offspring of Canaan, not of Judah, beauty has seduced you, lust has subverted your conscience. This is how you acted with the daughters of Israel, and in their fear they yielded to you; but a daughter of Judah did not tolerate your wickedness. Now, then, tell me under what tree you surprised them together.” “Under an oak,” he said. Daniel replied, “Your fine lie has cost you also your head, for the angel of God waits with a sword to cut you in two so as to make an end of you both.”

The whole assembly cried aloud, blessing God who saves those who hope in him. They rose up against the two elders, for by their own words Daniel had convicted them of perjury. According to the law of Moses, they inflicted on them



the penalty they had plotted to impose on their neighbor: they put them to death. Thus was innocent blood spared that day.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

**R7. (4ab)** Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;  
Beside restful waters he leads me;  
he refreshes my soul. **R7.**

He guides me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the dark valley  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side  
With your rod and your staff  
that give me courage. **R7.**

You spread the table before me  
in the sight of my foes;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows. **R7.**

Only goodness and kindness follow me  
all the days of my life;  
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
for years to come. **R7.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ezekiel 33:11

I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked man, says the Lord,  
but rather in his conversion, that he may live.

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 8:1-11***Let the person without sin be the first to throw a stone.*

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
 that, preparing to celebrate the holy mysteries,  
 we may bring before you as the fruit of bodily penance  
 a joyful purity of heart.  
 Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

John 8:10-11

Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. /  
Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Strengthened by the blessing of your Sacraments, we  
pray, O Lord,  
that through them we may constantly be cleansed of  
our faults  
and, by following Christ,  
hasten our steps upward toward you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### God Asks for Prayer

*The Lord heard Susanna's prayer.*

Praying in spirit we offer prayer to God as a sacrifice. Prayer is an appropriate and an acceptable sacrifice to God. It is the offering he has asked for and the offering he expects.

We must make this offering with our whole heart. We must fatten it on faith, prepare it by truth, keep it unblemished by innocence, spotless by chastity, and we must crown it with love. We must escort it to the altar of God in a procession of good works to the sound of psalms and hymns. Then it will gain for us all that we ask of God. What can God refuse to prayer offered in spirit and in truth, when he himself asks for such prayer? How many proofs of its efficacy we read about, hear of, and believe! . . .

If prayer once had the power to call down fire from heaven, is it any wonder that it can call down from heaven the waters of grace? Prayer is the one thing that can conquer God. But Christ has willed that it should work no evil: all the power he has given it is for good.

Its only skill is to call people back from the gates of death, give strength to the weak, heal the sick, exorcise the possessed, open prison doors, free the innocent from their chains. Prayer cleanses from sin, drives away temptations, stamps out persecutions, comforts the fainthearted, gives new strength to the courageous, brings travelers safely home, calms the waves, bemuses robbers, feeds the poor, overrules the rich, lifts up the fallen, supports the faltering, sustains those who stand firm.

All the angels pray. Every creature prays. Cattle and wild beasts pray and bend the knee. As they come from their barns and caves they look up to heaven and call out, lifting up their spirit in their own fashion. The birds too rise and lift themselves up to heaven: they open out their wings, instead of hands, in the form of a cross, and give voice to what seems to be a prayer.

What more need be said about the duty of prayer? Even the Lord himself prayed. To him be honor and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Tertullian, *On Prayer* chapters 28 & 29

*Tertullian (ca. 160–225), a native of Carthage, was a prolific early Christian writer. A notable Christian apologist, he has been called the "father of Latin Christianity."*

© *Give Us This Day* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2020)

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 34:12-19

Come, children, and hear me,  
that I may teach you the fear of the LORD.  
Who is eager for life  
and longs to see prosperous days?

Guard your tongue from evil,  
and your lips from speaking deceit.  
Turn aside from evil and do good.  
Seek after peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous;  
God's ears are open to their cry.  
The LORD's face is turned against the wicked  
to cut off their remembrance from the earth.

When the righteous cry out, the LORD hears,  
and rescues them in all their distress.  
The LORD is close to the brokenhearted,  
and saves those whose spirit is crushed.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

James 4:11-12

**D**o not speak evil of one another. . . . Whoever speaks evil of a brother or judges his brother speaks evil of the law and judges the law. If you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save or to destroy. Who then are you to judge your neighbor?

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

ANTIPHON

Those who condemned the woman went away one by one.

CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

INTERCESSIONS

Gracious God, you welcome all who seek you and teach us your wisdom. In faith we pray: **R7.** God, in your justice, hear our prayer.

Uphold efforts to procure freedom for all people. **R7.**

Help us to recognize and correct our practices of greed, extravagance, or disregard for the poor. **R7.**

Strengthen us to be advocates for nonviolence and to shut down institutions that train others to kill. **R7.**

Our Father . . .

May God bless us with every gift of the Spirit so that we may seek after peace and pursue it, all the days of our lives. Amen.

Tuesday, March 31

## Morning

O Lord, open my lips.  
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

PSALM 5:2-6, 12-13

(opt. hymn, pp. 370-75)

To my words give ear, O LORD;  
give heed to my sighs.  
Attend to the sound of my cry,  
my Sovereign and my God.

To you do I pray, O LORD.  
In the morning you hear my voice;  
in the morning I plead and watch before you.

You are no God who delights in evil;  
no sinner is your guest.  
The boastful shall not stand before your eyes.

All who take refuge in you shall be glad,  
and ever cry out their joy.  
You shelter them; in you they rejoice,  
those who love your name.  
It is you who bless the righteous, O LORD,  
you surround them with your favor like a shield.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 13-14

**B**etter is the end of a thing than its beginning; / better  
is a patient spirit than a lofty one. / Do not let anger  
upset your spirit, / for anger lodges in the bosom of a fool.

Do not say: How is it that former times were better than these? For it is not out of wisdom that you ask about this.

Consider the work of God. Who can make straight what God has made crooked? On a good day enjoy good things, and on an evil day consider: Both the one and the other God has made, so that no one may find the least fault with him.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The people complained against God and against Moses.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (*inside front cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

God of day and night, you guide us through the seasons of our lives. In faith we pray: **R**. Favor us with your counsel and love, O God.

For teachers, school administrators and staff, and early childhood professionals, we pray: **R**.

For social workers, psychologists, and spiritual companions, we pray: **R**.

For attorneys, judges, and juries, we pray: **R**.

Our Father . . .

May the Spirit of God be our hope through the day and our guard through the night, in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Blessed Among Us

### St. Maria Skobtsova

Orthodox Nun and Martyr (1891–1945)

Lisa Pilenko was born into an aristocratic family in Russia. A political activist in her youth, twice married and the mother of three, she joined the throng of refugees uprooted by the revolution in 1923 and made her way to Paris. There, after the death of her youngest daughter, she experienced a profound conversion. She emerged with a determination “to be a mother for all, for all who need care, assistance, or protection.”

In Paris she immersed herself in social work among the destitute Russian refugees. Increasingly she emphasized the religious dimension of this work, the insight that “each person is the very icon of God incarnate in the world.” Her bishop encouraged her to become a nun. Yet, she was determined to pioneer a new form of monasticism, engaged in the world, avoiding “even the subtlest barrier which might separate the heart from the world and its wounds.” In 1932 she made her monastic profession and became Mother Maria. In a house in Paris she established a soup kitchen, with her “cell” consisting of a cot in the basement beside the boiler.

After the German occupation of Paris she worked with her chaplain to hide and rescue Jews, leading eventually to her arrest along with her son. She survived two years in Ravensbruck concentration camp before dying on the eve of Easter, March 31, 1945.

In 2004 she was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church.

*“At the Last Judgment I shall not be asked whether I was successful in my ascetic exercises, nor how many bows and prostrations I made. Instead I shall be asked, Did I feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and the prisoners.”*

—Mother Maria Skobtsova

# Mass

*Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Lent*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Psalm 27 (26):14

Wait for the Lord; be strong; / be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord!

COLLECT

Grant us, we pray, O Lord,  
perseverance in obeying your will,  
that in our days the people dedicated to your service  
may grow in both merit and number.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Numbers

21:4-9

*Whoever looks at the bronze serpent, shall live.*

**F**rom Mount Hor the children of Israel set out on the Red Sea road, to bypass the land of Edom. But with their patience worn out by the journey, the people complained against God and Moses, “Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water? We are disgusted with this wretched food!”

In punishment the LORD sent among the people saraph serpents, which bit the people so that many of them died. Then the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned in complaining against the LORD and you. Pray the LORD to take the serpents away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people, and the LORD said to Moses, “Make a saraph and mount it on a pole, and whoever looks at it after being bitten will live.” Moses accordingly made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole, and whenever anyone who had been bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21

**R.** (2) O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

O LORD, hear my prayer,  
and let my cry come to you.

Hide not your face from me  
in the day of my distress.

Incline your ear to me;  
in the day when I call, answer me speedily. **R.**

The nations shall revere your name, O LORD,  
and all the kings of the earth your glory,  
When the LORD has rebuilt Zion  
and appeared in his glory;  
When he has regarded the prayer of the destitute,  
and not despised their prayer. **R.**

Let this be written for the generation to come,  
and let his future creatures praise the LORD:  
“The LORD looked down from his holy height,  
from heaven he beheld the earth,  
To hear the groaning of the prisoners,  
to release those doomed to die.” **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;  
all who come to him will live for ever.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 8:21-30

*When you have lifted up the Son of Man,  
then you will know that I am he.*

Jesus said to the Pharisees: “I am going away and you will look for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come.” So the Jews said, “He is not going to kill himself, is he, because he said, ‘Where I am

going you cannot come'?" He said to them, "You belong to what is below, I belong to what is above. You belong to this world, but I do not belong to this world. That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins." So they said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "What I told you from the beginning. I have much to say about you in condemnation. But the one who sent me is true, and what I heard from him I tell the world." They did not realize that he was speaking to them of the Father. So Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own, but I say only what the Father taught me. The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him." Because he spoke this way, many came to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation,  
that, being moved to compassion,  
you may both pardon our offenses  
and direct our wavering hearts.  
Through Christ our Lord.

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

John 12:32

When I am lifted up from the earth, / I will draw all to myself, says the Lord.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that, ever seeking what is divine,  
we may always be worthy  
to approach these heavenly gifts.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## Reflection

### Are We There Yet?

The children of Israel have had it! They stomp over to Moses and present their list of complaints. The journey is too long (are we there yet?). The scenery is boring (all sand and rocks!). And the food is disgusting (yuk!). Notice, they do not offer any alternatives. Why? Because they probably know there are only two alternatives. Go back to slavery in Egypt. Or shut up, trust God, and keep moving forward.

In their complaining, the Israelites had lost sight of the bigger picture: They were alive! They were loved! They were free! And they were on their way to the Promised Land!

We can empathize with the Israelites. At times we too lose all patience. Our life's journey becomes discouraging or just plain hard. We look around, and all we see is bleakness. Even things that once nourished us have lost their flavor. So we complain and cry out to God to do something.

We forget that God has already done something: given us Jesus. And Jesus' life was not always a picnic either. When the going gets rough for us, let us gaze upon the cross. This venerable icon recalls Jesus' goodness, patience, and absolute trust in Abba. We can draw encouragement from his undying love for us and his final triumph over sin and death.

At times, we may need to complain. A little. As long as we eventually refocus on the bigger picture, trust God absolutely, and keep moving forward.

Sr. Melannie Svoboda

*Melannie Svoboda, a Sister of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, gives talks and retreats nationally. Visit her blog, "Sunflower Seeds," at [www.melanniesvobodasnd.org](http://www.melanniesvobodasnd.org).*

## Evening

God, come to my assistance.  
Lord, make haste to help me.

(opt. hymn, pp. 370–75)

PSALM 99:1-2, 5-9

The LORD is king; the peoples tremble.  
God is enthroned on the cherubim; earth quakes.  
The LORD is great in Zion,  
exalted over all the peoples.

Exalt the LORD our God;  
bow down before God's footstool,  
for the Lord our God is holy!

Among God's priests were Aaron and Moses;  
among those who invoked God's name was Samuel.  
They cried out to the LORD, who answered.

To them the Lord spoke in the pillar of cloud.  
They obeyed the decrees and the statutes  
which the Lord had given them.

O LORD our God, you answered them.  
For them you were a God who forgives,  
and yet you punished their offenses.

Exalt the LORD our God;  
bow down before the holy mountain,  
for the LORD our God is holy.

Glory to the Father . . .

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 4:13-16

Since, then, we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we too believe and therefore speak, knowing that the one who raised

the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

READ, PONDER, PRAY on a word or phrase from these readings or another of today's Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*, p. 369)

#### ANTIPHON

The one who sent me is true, and what I heard from him I tell the world.

#### CANTICLE OF MARY (*inside back cover*)

#### INTERCESSIONS

Lover of justice, you forgive our offenses and bid us to do the same for one another. In hope we pray: **R**. Holy God, come to our aid.

Quiet our minds and hearts so that we may know, nurture, and share the gifts you offer to us in the Holy Spirit. **R**.

Protect the unborn, safeguard pregnant women, and bring an end to the practice of abortion. **R**.

Welcome into the light of your presence all who die this night. **R**.

**Our Father . . .**

May the peace and grace of Jesus Christ be with us and flourish into Easter joy, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

# The Order of Mass

■ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

■ Amen.

## GREETING

**A** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.  
**And with your spirit.**

**B** Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
**And with your spirit.**

**C** The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**

## PENITENTIAL ACT

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,  
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

*(Pause)*

**A** I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

*And, striking their breast, they say:*

through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;

*Then they continue:*



therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

**B** Have mercy on us, O Lord.  
For we have sinned against you.  
Show us, O Lord, your mercy.  
And grant us your salvation.

*These or other invocations may be used.*

**C** You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:  
Lord, have mercy. **Or:** Kyrie, eleison.  
Lord, have mercy. **Or:** Kyrie, eleison.  
You came to call sinners:  
Christ, have mercy. **Or:** Christe, eleison.  
Christ, have mercy. **Or:** Christe, eleison.  
You are seated at the right hand of the Father to  
intercede for us:  
Lord, have mercy. **Or:** Kyrie, eleison.  
Lord, have mercy. **Or:** Kyrie, eleison.

■ May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

■ Amen.

### KYRIE

*The Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy) invocations follow, unless they have just occurred in a formula of the Penitential Act.*

■ Lord, have mercy.	■ Kyrie, eleison.
■ Lord, have mercy.	■ Kyrie, eleison.
■ Christ, have mercy.	■ Christe, eleison.
■ Christ, have mercy.	■ Christe, eleison.
■ Lord, have mercy.	■ Kyrie, eleison.
■ Lord, have mercy.	■ Kyrie, eleison.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
    have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT (OPENING PRAYER)**

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**FIRST READING**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

**SECOND READING**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

### GOSPEL

Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God,  
that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel.

■ The Lord be with you.

■ And with your spirit.

■ A reading from the holy Gospel according to **N**.

■ Glory to you, O Lord.

*At the end:*

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

■ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Through the words of the Gospel  
may our sins be wiped away.

## HOMILY

### PROFESSION OF FAITH

[The Apostles' Creed can be found on p. 367]

#### Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,**

At the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow.

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL (BIDDING PRAYERS)

#### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

#### PRESENTATION AND PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you:

fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

By the mystery of this water and wine  
may we come to share in the divinity of Christ  
who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have received  
the wine we offer you:  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands,  
it will become our spiritual drink.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

With humble spirit and contrite heart  
may we be accepted by you, O Lord,  
and may our sacrifice in your sight this day  
be pleasing to you, Lord God.

Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

#### INVITATION TO PRAYER

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),  
that my sacrifice and yours  
may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good  
and the good of all his holy Church.**

#### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

##### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- The Lord be with you. ■ And with your spirit.
- Lift up your hearts. ■ We lift them up to the Lord.
- Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- It is right and just.

**PREFACE OF THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

*The Temptation of the Lord*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

By abstaining forty long days from earthly food,  
he consecrated through his fast  
the pattern of our Lenten observance  
and, by overturning all the snares of the ancient serpent,  
taught us to cast out the leaven of malice,  
so that, celebrating worthily the Paschal Mystery,  
we might pass over at last to the eternal paschal feast.

And so, with the company of Angels and Saints,  
we sing the hymn of your praise,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

**PREFACE OF THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT**

*The Transfiguration of the Lord*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For after he had told the disciples of his coming Death,  
on the holy mountain he manifested to them his glory,  
to show, even by the testimony of the law and the prophets,  
that the Passion leads to the glory of the Resurrection.

And so, with the Powers of heaven,  
we worship you constantly on earth,  
and before your majesty  
without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

PREFACE OF THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A

*The Samaritan Woman*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For when he asked the Samaritan woman for water to drink,  
he had already created the gift of faith within her  
and so ardently did he thirst for her faith,  
that he kindled in her the fire of divine love.

And so we, too, give you thanks  
and with the Angels  
praise your mighty deeds, as we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

PREFACE OF THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A

*The Man Born Blind*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

By the mystery of the Incarnation,  
he has led the human race that walked in darkness  
into the radiance of the faith  
and has brought those born in slavery to ancient sin  
through the waters of regeneration  
to make them your adopted children.

Therefore, all creatures of heaven and earth  
sing a new song in adoration,  
and we, with all the host of Angels,  
cry out, and without end acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

**PREFACE OF THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A**

*Lazarus*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For as true man he wept for Lazarus his friend  
and as eternal God raised him from the tomb,  
just as, taking pity on the human race,  
he leads us by sacred mysteries to new life.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty  
and rejoices in your presence for ever.

May our voices, we pray, join with theirs  
in one chorus of exultant praise, as we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

**PREFACE OF THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH**

*The mission of Saint Joseph*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
and on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph  
to give you fitting praise,  
to glorify you and bless you.

For this just man was given by you  
as spouse to the Virgin Mother of God  
and set as a wise and faithful servant  
in charge of your household,  
to watch like a father over your Only Begotten Son,  
who was conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through him the Angels praise your majesty,  
Dominions adore and Powers tremble before you.



Heaven and the Virtues of heaven and the blessed Seraphim  
worship together with exultation.

May our voices, we pray, join with theirs  
in humble praise, as we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

**PREFACE OF THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION**

*The mystery of the Incarnation*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For the Virgin Mary heard with faith  
that the Christ was to be born among men and for men's sake  
by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit.  
Lovingly she bore him in her immaculate womb,  
that the promises to the children of Israel might come about  
and the hope of nations be accomplished beyond all telling.

Through him the host of Angels adores your majesty  
and rejoices in your presence for ever.

May our voices, we pray, join with theirs  
in one chorus of exultant praise, as we acclaim:

**SANCTUS**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dóminus Deus Sábaoth.**

**Pleni sunt caeli et terra glória tua.**

**Hosánna in excélsis.**

**Benedíctus qui venit in nómine Dómini.**

**Hosánna in excélsis.**

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER I (Roman Canon)**

To you, therefore, most merciful Father,  
 we make humble prayer and petition  
 through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord:  
 that you accept  
 and bless † these gifts, these offerings,  
 these holy and unblemished sacrifices,  
 which we offer you firstly  
 for your holy catholic Church.  
 Be pleased to grant her peace,  
 to guard, unite and govern her  
 throughout the whole world,  
 together with your servant **N.** our Pope  
 and **N.** our Bishop,  
 and all those who, holding to the truth,  
 hand on the catholic and apostolic faith.

Remember, Lord, your servants **N.** and **N.**  
 and all gathered here,  
 whose faith and devotion are known to you.  
 For them, we offer you this sacrifice of praise  
 or they offer it for themselves  
 and all who are dear to them:  
 for the redemption of their souls,  
 in hope of health and well-being,  
 and paying their homage to you,  
 the eternal God, living and true.

In communion with those whose memory we venerate,  
 especially the glorious ever-Virgin Mary,  
 Mother of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ,  
 † and blessed Joseph, her Spouse,  
 your blessed Apostles and Martyrs,  
 Peter and Paul, Andrew,  
 (James, John,  
 Thomas, James, Philip,

Bartholomew, Matthew,  
Simon and Jude;  
Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus,  
Cornelius, Cyprian,  
Lawrence, Chrysogonus,  
John and Paul,  
Cosmas and Damian)  
and all your Saints;  
we ask that through their merits and prayers,  
in all things we may be defended  
by your protecting help.  
(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

Therefore, Lord, we pray:  
graciously accept this oblation of our service,  
that of your whole family;  
order our days in your peace,  
and command that we be delivered from eternal damnation  
and counted among the flock of those you have chosen.  
(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

Be pleased, O God, we pray,  
to bless, acknowledge,  
and approve this offering in every respect;  
make it spiritual and acceptable,  
so that it may become for us  
the Body and Blood of your most beloved Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the day before he was to suffer,  
he took bread in his holy and venerable hands,  
and with eyes raised to heaven  
to you, O God, his almighty Father,  
giving you thanks, he said the blessing,  
broke the bread  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,  
he took this precious chalice  
in his holy and venerable hands,  
and once more giving you thanks, he said the blessing  
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY  
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

**A** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**B** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

**C** Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

Therefore, O Lord,  
as we celebrate the memorial of the blessed Passion,  
the Resurrection from the dead,  
and the glorious Ascension into heaven  
of Christ, your Son, our Lord,  
we, your servants and your holy people,  
offer to your glorious majesty

from the gifts that you have given us,  
this pure victim,  
this holy victim,  
this spotless victim,  
the holy Bread of eternal life  
and the Chalice of everlasting salvation.

Be pleased to look upon these offerings  
with a serene and kindly countenance,  
and to accept them,  
as once you were pleased to accept  
the gifts of your servant Abel the just,  
the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith,  
and the offering of your high priest Melchizedek,  
a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.

In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God:  
command that these gifts be borne  
by the hands of your holy Angel  
to your altar on high  
in the sight of your divine majesty,  
so that all of us, who through this participation at the altar  
receive the most holy Body and Blood of your Son,  
may be filled with every grace and heavenly blessing.  
(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

Remember also, Lord, your servants **N.** and **N.**,  
who have gone before us with the sign of faith  
and rest in the sleep of peace.

Grant them, O Lord, we pray,  
and all who sleep in Christ,  
a place of refreshment, light and peace.  
(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners,  
hope in your abundant mercies,  
graciously grant some share

and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs:  
 with John the Baptist, Stephen,  
 Matthias, Barnabas,  
 (Ignatius, Alexander,  
 Marcellinus, Peter,  
 Felicity, Perpetua,  
 Agatha, Lucy,  
 Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia)  
 and all your Saints;  
 admit us, we beseech you,  
 into their company,  
 not weighing our merits,  
 but granting us your pardon,  
 through Christ our Lord.

Through whom  
 you continue to make all these good things, O Lord;  
 you sanctify them, fill them with life,  
 bless them, and bestow them upon us.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
 O God, almighty Father,  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 all glory and honor is yours,  
 for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer, p. 362.*

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER II**

### **Preface**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
 always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy,  
 through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,  
 your Word through whom you made all things,  
 whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer,  
 incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people,  
he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion,  
so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection.

And so, with the Angels and all the Saints  
we declare your glory,  
as with one voice we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

You are indeed Holy, O Lord,  
the fount of all holiness.  
Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,  
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall,  
so that they may become for us  
the Body and ✠ Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed  
and entered willingly into his Passion,  
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,  
he took the chalice  
and, once more giving thanks,  
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY  
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.**

**DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

The mystery of faith.

**A** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**B** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

**C** Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

Therefore, as we celebrate  
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,  
we offer you, Lord,  
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,  
giving thanks that you have held us worthy  
to be in your presence and minister to you.

Humbly we pray  
that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,  
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church,  
spread throughout the world,  
and bring her to the fullness of charity,  
together with **N.** our Pope and **N.** our Bishop  
and all the clergy.

Remember also our brothers and sisters  
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,  
and all who have died in your mercy:  
welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,  
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,  
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse,  
with the blessed Apostles,  
and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages,



we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,  
and may praise and glorify you  
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours,  
for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer, p. 362.*

### **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER III**

You are indeed Holy, O Lord,  
and all you have created  
rightly gives you praise,  
for through your Son our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by the power and working of the Holy Spirit,  
you give life to all things and make them holy,  
and you never cease to gather a people to yourself,  
so that from the rising of the sun to its setting  
a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name.

Therefore, O Lord, we humbly implore you:  
by the same Spirit graciously make holy  
these gifts we have brought to you for consecration,  
that they may become the Body and ✠ Blood  
of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ,  
at whose command we celebrate these mysteries.

For on the night he was betrayed  
he himself took bread,  
and, giving you thanks, he said the blessing,  
broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,  
he took the chalice,  
and, giving you thanks, he said the blessing,  
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY  
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

**A** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**B** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

**C** Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

Therefore, O Lord, as we celebrate the memorial  
of the saving Passion of your Son,  
his wondrous Resurrection  
and Ascension into heaven,  
and as we look forward to his second coming,  
we offer you in thanksgiving  
this holy and living sacrifice.

Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church

and, recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death  
you willed to reconcile us to yourself,  
grant that we, who are nourished  
by the Body and Blood of your Son  
and filled with his Holy Spirit,  
may become one body, one spirit in Christ.

May he make of us  
an eternal offering to you,  
so that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect,  
especially with the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,  
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse,  
with your blessed Apostles and glorious Martyrs  
(with Saint N.: the Saint of the day or Patron Saint)  
and with all the Saints,  
on whose constant intercession in your presence  
we rely for unfailing help.

May this Sacrifice of our reconciliation,  
we pray, O Lord,  
advance the peace and salvation of all the world.  
Be pleased to confirm in faith and charity  
your pilgrim Church on earth,  
with your servant N. our Pope and N. our Bishop,  
the Order of Bishops, all the clergy,  
and the entire people you have gained for your own.

Listen graciously to the prayers of this family,  
whom you have summoned before you:  
in your compassion, O merciful Father,  
gather to yourself all your children  
scattered throughout the world.

† To our departed brothers and sisters  
and to all who were pleasing to you  
at their passing from this life,  
give kind admittance to your kingdom.

There we hope to enjoy for ever the fullness of your glory  
through Christ our Lord,  
through whom you bestow on the world all that is good. †

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours,  
for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer, p. 362.*

## **EUCHARISTIC PRAYER IV**

### **Preface**

It is truly right to give you thanks,  
truly just to give you glory, Father most holy,  
for you are the one God living and true,  
existing before all ages and abiding for all eternity,  
dwelling in unapproachable light;  
yet you, who alone are good, the source of life,  
have made all that is,  
so that you might fill your creatures with blessings  
and bring joy to many of them by the glory of your light.

And so, in your presence are countless hosts of Angels,  
who serve you day and night  
and, gazing upon the glory of your face,  
glorify you without ceasing.

With them we, too, confess your name in exultation,  
giving voice to every creature under heaven,  
as we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

We give you praise, Father most holy,  
for you are great

and you have fashioned all your works  
in wisdom and in love.

You formed man in your own image  
and entrusted the whole world to his care,  
so that in serving you alone, the Creator,  
he might have dominion over all creatures.

And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship,  
you did not abandon him to the domain of death.

For you came in mercy to the aid of all,  
so that those who seek might find you.

Time and again you offered them covenants  
and through the prophets  
taught them to look forward to salvation.

And you so loved the world, Father most holy,  
that in the fullness of time  
you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior.

Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary,  
he shared our human nature  
in all things but sin.

To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation,  
to prisoners, freedom,  
and to the sorrowful of heart, joy.

To accomplish your plan,  
he gave himself up to death,  
and, rising from the dead,  
he destroyed death and restored life.

And that we might live no longer for ourselves  
but for him who died and rose again for us,  
he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father,  
as the first fruits for those who believe,  
so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world,  
he might sanctify creation to the full.

Therefore, O Lord, we pray:  
may this same Holy Spirit  
graciously sanctify these offerings,  
that they may become  
the Body and ✠ Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
for the celebration of this great mystery,  
which he himself left us  
as an eternal covenant.

For when the hour had come  
for him to be glorified by you, Father most holy,  
having loved his own who were in the world,  
he loved them to the end:  
and while they were at supper,  
he took bread, blessed and broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way,  
taking the chalice filled with the fruit of the vine,  
he gave thanks,  
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY  
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

**A** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**B** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

**C** Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

Therefore, O Lord,  
as we now celebrate the memorial of our redemption,  
we remember Christ's Death  
and his descent to the realm of the dead,  
we proclaim his Resurrection  
and his Ascension to your right hand,  
and, as we await his coming in glory,  
we offer you his Body and Blood,  
the sacrifice acceptable to you  
which brings salvation to the whole world.

Look, O Lord, upon the Sacrifice  
which you yourself have provided for your Church,  
and grant in your loving kindness  
to all who partake of this one Bread and one Chalice  
that, gathered into one body by the Holy Spirit,  
they may truly become a living sacrifice in Christ  
to the praise of your glory.

Therefore, Lord, remember now  
all for whom we offer this sacrifice:  
especially your servant **N.** our Pope,  
**N.** our Bishop, and the whole Order of Bishops,  
all the clergy,  
those who take part in this offering,  
those gathered here before you,  
your entire people,  
and all who seek you with a sincere heart.

Remember also  
those who have died in the peace of your Christ  
and all the dead,  
whose faith you alone have known.

To all of us, your children,  
grant, O merciful Father,  
that we may enter into a heavenly inheritance  
with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,  
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse,  
and with your Apostles and Saints in your kingdom.  
There, with the whole of creation,  
freed from the corruption of sin and death,  
may we glorify you through Christ our Lord,  
through whom you bestow on the world all that is good.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours,  
for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer, p. 362.*

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER FOR RECONCILIATION I**

### **Preface**

It is truly right and just  
that we should always give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you do not cease to spur us on  
to possess a more abundant life  
and, being rich in mercy,  
you constantly offer pardon



and call on sinners  
to trust in your forgiveness alone.

Never did you turn away from us,  
and, though time and again we have broken your covenant,  
you have bound the human family to yourself  
through Jesus your Son, our Redeemer,  
with a new bond of love so tight  
that it can never be undone.

Even now you set before your people  
a time of grace and reconciliation,  
and, as they turn back to you in spirit,  
you grant them hope in Christ Jesus  
and a desire to be of service to all,  
while they entrust themselves  
more fully to the Holy Spirit.

And so, filled with wonder,  
we extol the power of your love,  
and, proclaiming our joy  
at the salvation that comes from you,  
we join in the heavenly hymn of countless hosts,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .**

You are indeed Holy, O Lord,  
and from the world's beginning  
are ceaselessly at work,  
so that the human race may become holy,  
just as you yourself are holy.

Look, we pray, upon your people's offerings  
and pour out on them the power of your Spirit,  
that they may become the Body and ✠ Blood  
of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,  
in whom we, too, are your sons and daughters.

Indeed, though we once were lost  
and could not approach you,  
you loved us with the greatest love:  
for your Son, who alone is just,  
handed himself over to death,  
and did not disdain to be nailed for our sake  
to the wood of the Cross.

But before his arms were outstretched between heaven  
and earth,  
to become the lasting sign of your covenant,  
he desired to celebrate the Passover with his disciples.

As he ate with them,  
he took bread  
and, giving you thanks, he said the blessing,  
broke the bread and gave it to them, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,  
knowing that he was about to reconcile all things in  
himself

through his Blood to be shed on the Cross,  
he took the chalice, filled with the fruit of the vine,  
and once more giving you thanks,  
handed the chalice to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY  
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

**A** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**B** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

**C** Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

Therefore, as we celebrate  
the memorial of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who is our Passover and our surest peace,  
we celebrate his Death and Resurrection from the dead,  
and looking forward to his blessed Coming,  
we offer you, who are our faithful and merciful God,  
this sacrificial Victim  
who reconciles to you the human race.

Look kindly, most compassionate Father,  
on those you unite to yourself  
by the Sacrifice of your Son,  
and grant that, by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
as they partake of this one Bread and one Chalice,  
they may be gathered into one Body in Christ,  
who heals every division.

Be pleased to keep us always  
in communion of mind and heart,  
together with **N.** our Pope and **N.** our Bishop.  
Help us to work together  
for the coming of your Kingdom,  
until the hour when we stand before you,

Saints among the Saints in the halls of heaven,  
with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,  
the blessed Apostles and all the Saints,  
and with our deceased brothers and sisters,  
whom we humbly commend to your mercy.

Then, freed at last from the wound of corruption  
and made fully into a new creation,  
we shall sing to you with gladness  
the thanksgiving of Christ,  
who lives for all eternity.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours,  
for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## COMMUNION RITE

### LORD'S PRAYER

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**For the kingdom,  
the power and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.**

**SIGN OF PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who said to your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you,  
look not on our sins,  
but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**And with your spirit.**

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

**BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

May this mingling of the Body and Blood  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
bring eternal life to us who receive it.

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.**

**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:  
miserere nobis.**

**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:  
miserere nobis.**

**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:  
dona nobis pacem.**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,  
who, by the will of the Father  
and the work of the Holy Spirit,  
through your Death gave life to the world,  
free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood,  
from all my sins and from every evil;  
keep me always faithful to your commandments,  
and never let me be parted from you.

**Or:**

May the receiving of your Body and Blood,  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
not bring me to judgment and condemnation,  
but through your loving mercy  
be for me protection in mind and body  
and a healing remedy.

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed.**

*If there is no singing, the communion antiphon is recited.*

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

#### CONCLUDING RITES

##### FINAL BLESSING

- The Lord be with you.
- **And with your spirit.**
- May almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✝ and the Holy Spirit.
- **Amen.**

##### DISMISSAL

- A** Go forth, the Mass is ended.
- B** Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
- D** Go in peace.

**Thanks be to God.**

# *Celebration of the Liturgy of the Word*

## *[With Holy Communion]*

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

#### INTRODUCTION

Deacon or lay leader:

We gather here to celebrate the Lord's Day.

Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because

it was on this day

that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life.

Unfortunately, we are not able to celebrate the Mass today

because we do not have a priest.

Let us be united in the spirit of Christ with

the Church around the world

and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering,

death, and resurrection.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

Deacon or lay leader:

■ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

■ Amen.

#### GREETING

Deacon or lay leader:

■ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

■ Blessed be God for ever.

#### COLLECT

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### FIRST READING

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

#### SECOND READING

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

#### GOSPEL

#### HOMILY OR REFLECTION ON THE READINGS



PERIOD OF SILENCE

PROFESSION OF FAITH

[The Nicene Creed can be found on p. 337]

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary,  
all bow.

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

COMMUNION RITE

LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon or lay leader:

The Father provides us with food for eternal life.  
At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**Deacon or lay leader:**

**Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.**

**Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed.**

#### **COMMUNION**

#### **ACT OF THANKSGIVING**

#### **CONCLUDING RITE**

#### **INVITATION TO PRAY FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

**Deacon or lay leader:**

**Mindful of our Lord's word, "Ask the Master of the harvest to send out laborers for the harvest," let us pray for an increase of vocations to the priesthood. May our prayer hasten the day when we will be able to take part in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday.**

#### **BLESSING**

#### **SIGN OF PEACE**

## Guide to *Lectio Divina*

Choose a word or phrase of the Scriptures you wish to pray. It makes no difference which text is chosen, as long as you have no set goal of “covering” a certain amount of text. The amount of text covered is in God’s hands, not yours.

*Read.* Turn to the text and read it slowly, gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for the “still, small voice” of a word or phrase that somehow says, “I am for you today.” Do not expect lightning or ecstasies. In *lectio divina*, God is teaching us to listen, to seek him in silence. God does not reach out and grab us but gently invites us ever more deeply into his presence.

*Ponder.* Take the word or phrase into yourself. Memorize it and slowly repeat it to yourself, allowing it to interact with your inner world of concerns, memories, and ideas. Do not be afraid of distractions. Memories or thoughts are simply parts of yourself that, when they rise up during *lectio divina*, are asking to be given to God along with the rest of your inner self. Allow this inner pondering, this rumination, to invite you into dialogue with God.

*Pray.* Whether you use words, ideas, or images—or all three—is not important. Interact with God as you would with one who you know loves and accepts you. Give to God what you have discovered during your experience of meditation. Give to God what you have found within your heart.

It is not necessary to assess the quality of your *lectio divina*, as if you were “performing” or seeking some goal. *Lectio divina* has no goal other than that of being in the presence of God by praying the Scriptures.

—Fr. Luke Dysinger

*Luke Dysinger, OSB, is a Benedictine monk of Saint Andrew’s Abbey, Valyermo, California.*

## O God of Faith, by You We Live

Lent—AM

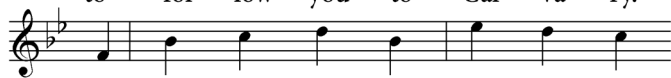
Familiar Tune: On Jordan's Bank



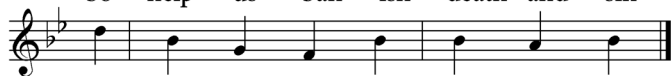
1. O God of faith, by you we live;  
 2. A - rise be - neath the morn - ing skies,  
 3. May your re - demp - tion set us free



un - fail - ing is the hope you give.  
 O Lamb pre - pared for sac - ri - fice.  
 to fol - low you to Cal - va - ry.



Of your for - give - ness let us sing,  
 We bear the cross a - long the way  
 So help us ban - ish death and sin



and hearts of pen - ance let us bring.  
 that leads to life from day to day.  
 that you, O Lord, may dwell with - in.

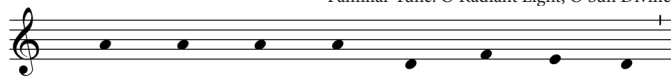
Text: Unknown.

Music: WINCHESTER NEW, 88 88; adapt. from *Musikalisches Handbuch*, Hamburg, 1690.

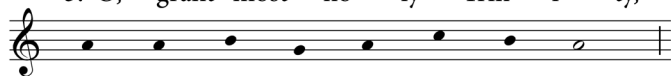
## O Merciful Redeemer, Hear

Lent—AM/PM

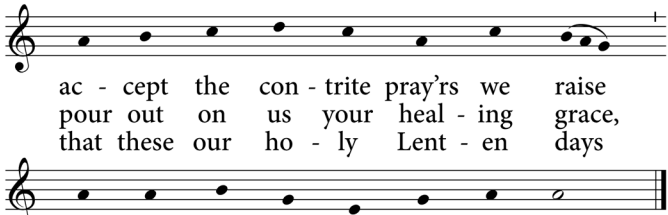
Familiar Tune: O Radiant Light, O Sun Divine



1. O mer - ci - ful Re - deem - er, hear:  
 2. Our hearts are o - pen, Lord, to thee  
 3. O, grant most ho - ly Trin - i - ty,



in pit - y now in - cline your ear;  
 and know - ing our in - iq - ui - ty,  
 in un - di - vid - ed u - ni - ty,



ac - cept the con - trite pray'rs we raise  
 pour out on us your heal - ing grace,  
 that these our ho - ly Lent - en days

in this our fast of for - ty days.  
 re - store to life a fall - en race.  
 in - crease our mer - it and your praise.

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Music: JESU DULCIS MEMORIA, 88 88; Plainchant, Mode I.

### The Glory of These Forty Days

Lent—AM/PM



1. The glo - ry of these for - ty days  
 2. A - lone and fast - ing, Mo - ses saw  
 3. So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight,

we cel - e - brate with songs of praise;  
 the lov - ing God who gave the law;  
 de - liv - ered from the li - on's might;

for Christ, by whom all things were made,  
 and to E - li - jah, fast - ing, came  
 and John, the Bride-groom's friend, be - came

him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.  
 the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.  
 the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.

Text: *Clarum decus jejuni*; ascr. to Gregory the Great, c. 540–604; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862–1931.

Music: ERHALT UNS HERR, LM, Klug's *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543.

## Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

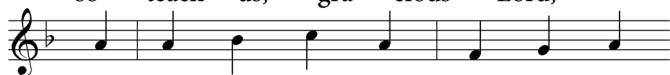
Lent—AM/PM



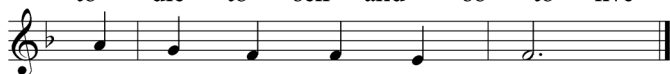
1. Lord, who through-out these for - ty days,  
 2. As you with Sa - tan did con - tend  
 3. As you did hun - ger and did thirst,



for us did fast and pray.  
 and did the vic - t'ry win,  
 so teach us, gra - cious Lord,



Teach us to o - ver - come our sins,  
 O give us strength in you to fight,  
 to die to self and so to live



and close by you to stay.  
 in you to con - quer sin.  
 by your most ho - ly word.

Text: Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838–1898, alt.

Music: ST. FLAVIAN, 86 86, adapt. from *John Day's Psalter*, 1562.

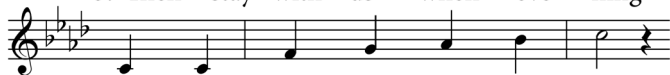
## Lord Jesus, as We Turn from Sin

Lent—AM/PM

Familiar Tune: The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns



1. Lord Je - sus, as we turn from  
 2. Reach out and touch with heal - ing  
 3. Then stay with us when eve - ning



sin with strength and hope re - stored,  
 pow'r the wounds we have re - ceived,  
 comes and dark - ness makes us blind,

re - ceive the hom - age that we  
 that in for - give - ness we may  
 O stay un - til the light of  
 bring to you, our ris - en Lord.  
 love and may no long - er grieve.  
 dawn may fill both heart and mind.

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### Forty Days and Forty Nights

Lent—PM

1. For - ty days and for - ty nights  
 2. Shall not we, your sor - row share  
 3. And if Sa - tan on us press,  
 you were fast - ing in the wild;  
 and from world - ly joys ab - stain,  
 flesh or spir - it to as - sail,  
 for - ty days and for - ty nights  
 fast - ing with un - ceas - ing prayer,  
 vic - tor in the wil - der - ness,  
 tempt - ed and yet un - de - filed.  
 strong with you to suf - fer pain?  
 grant we may not faint or fail!

Text: George Hunt Smyttan, 1822–1890; tr. Francis Pott, 1832–1909, alt.

Music: HEINLEIN, 77 77, Martin Herbst, 1654–1681, attr.

## All Creation Was Renewed

Marian—AM

Familiar Tune: Savior of the Nations, Come



1. All cre - a - tion was re - newed  
 2. By the Ho - ly Spir - it's love  
 3. Mo - ment of un - e - qualed faith,  
 4. Christ, the ho - ly one of God,



by the pow'r of God most high,  
 God pro-nounced his sav - ing Word,  
 here in an - y time or place:  
 Son of Da - vid, light from light,



when his pro - mise was ful - filled  
 then with free con - sent and trust  
 thus did God put on our flesh  
 dwells on earth, his glo - ry dimmed



Ad - am's race to jus - ti - fy.  
 Ma - ry bore cre - a - tion's Lord.  
 in his Vir - gin full of grace.  
 till he comes a - gain with might.

Text: © 1974, 1995, Stanbrook Abbey, Wass, York, UK. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, 77 77; Erfurt *Enchiridia*, Wittenberg, 1524.

## O Mary of Graces

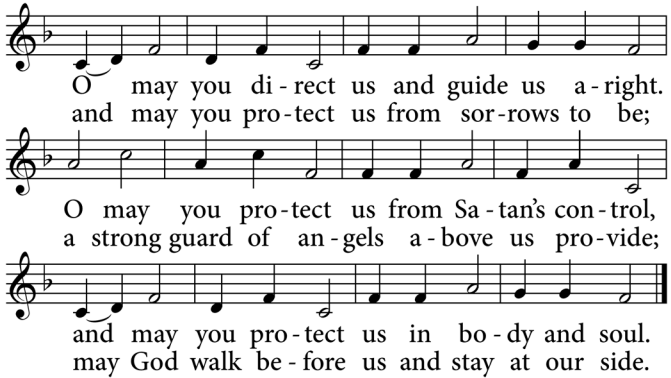
Marian—AM/PM

Familiar Tune: How Firm a Foundation



1. O Ma - ry of gra - ces and mo - ther of Christ,  
 2. O may you pro - tect us by land and by sea,





O may you di - rect us and guide us a - right.  
and may you pro - tect us from sor - rows to be;

O may you pro - tect us from Sa - tan's con - trol,  
a strong guard of an - gels a - bove us pro - vide;

and may you pro - tect us in bo - dy and soul.  
may God walk be - fore us and stay at our side.

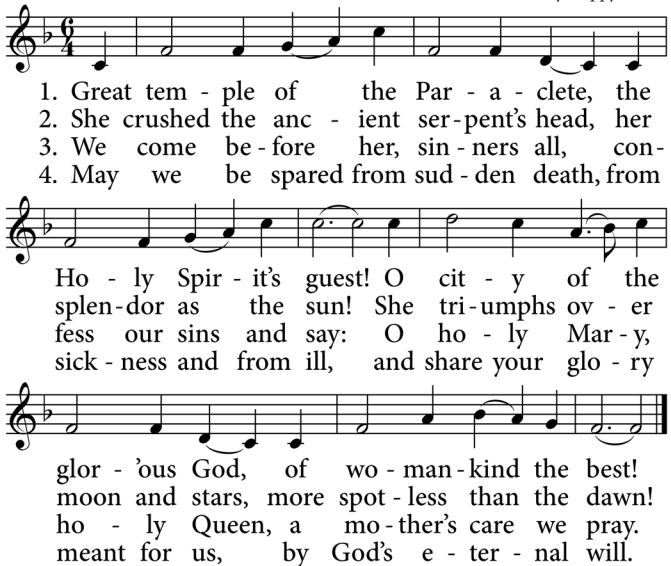
Text: Traditional Irish, alt.

Music: FOUNDATION, 11 11 11 11; Funk's *Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 1832.

## Great Temple of the Paraclete

Marian—AM/PM

Familiar Tune: Jerusalem, My Happy Home



1. Great tem - ple of the Par - a - clete, the  
2. She crushed the anc - ient ser - pent's head, her  
3. We come be - fore her, sin - ners all, con -  
4. May we be spared from sud - den death, from

Ho - ly Spir - it's guest! O cit - y of the  
splen - dor as the sun! She tri - umphs ov - er  
fess our sins and say: O ho - ly Mar - y,  
sick - ness and from ill, and share your glo - ry

glo - r'ous God, of wo - man - kind the best!  
moon and stars, more spot - less than the dawn!  
ho - ly Queen, a mo - ther's care we pray.  
meant for us, by God's e - ter - nal will.

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Music: LAND OF REST, CM, American.

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## About the Cover

This month's cover artist, John August Swanson, notes that his *Gift of Water* painting "is about our thirst to communicate with the whole human family and to find ways to resolve conflicts" ([www.johnaugustswanson.com](http://www.johnaugustswanson.com)). Who is this woman to whom Jesus reaches out? As a woman, and a Samaritan no less, she would not expect a conversation with Jesus, an unknown man. Yet, he seems already to know her story. A closer look at the image will provide a bit more insight.

The painting shows Sychar, the Samaritan village where the story takes place, and Jacob's well, located some distance outside the village. Notice that only Jesus and the woman are near the well. The other villagers in the painting would be far off, back in the village. The woman, having had five husbands, and now living with a man who is not her husband, likely has few friends back in the village. Perhaps this is why she has come out to the well around noon, not the best time of day for carrying heavy loads to and from home.

We can imagine that the woman overcomes her uncomfortable relationships back in the village when she returns to tell the others about this man who "told me everything I have done." By nothing more than his presence, and a perhaps culturally suspect conversation, Jesus brings this woman back into relationship with her village. Ultimately, he even convinces many of the villagers to believe in his Truth. Having accepted him into their midst, they finally acclaim, "We know that this is truly the savior of the world." As Mr. Swanson points out, we thirst to communicate with one another. Sometimes we just need a push from someone who knows everything about us—or from God's Holy Spirit.

—Br. Ælred Senna

*Ælred Senna, OSB, is a monk of Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, and associate editor of Give Us This Day.*

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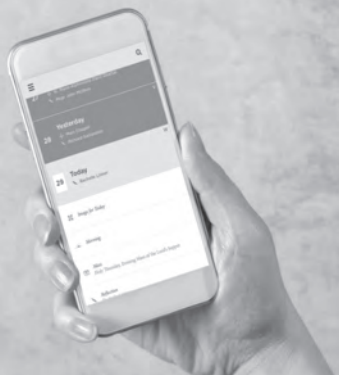
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## Canticle of Mary (Magnificat)

Luke 1:46-55

**M**y soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior  
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him  
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,  
the promise he made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.



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