



Second Sunday of Lent

February 25, 2018

GOSPEL MARK 1: 9: 2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.





February 25, 2018

GOSPEL MARK 1: 9: 2-10



In our Parish Journey “LET GO”, we began with Simpler, journeyed through Happier and now have arrived at Holier. “Holy” is a hard word to define; certainly, for our culture, we think “holy” means praying all day, being a priest or nun, or serving in soup kitchens. We also need to address that a holier life means more than coming to church every Sunday. We have a hard time connecting with what “holier” means let alone how it could have any relevance to our 21st century lives. Throughout the next four weeks we are going to explore the path to a holier life.

It is by design, in Lent, that we have arrived at the turning point to “holier” in our parish journey. These Lenten readings are the essential guide to “Letting Go” and embracing a holier life. These 40 days of Lent are a time for letting go of the things that stand in the way of letting Jesus be at the center. In many ways, Lent is like a long retreat – a time of exploration on our way to renewing our baptismal mission.

- ◆ **What are you praying for in your relationship with Jesus this Lent? Who are you for in their relationship with Christ?**

The three disciples on Mount Tabor are commanded to “listen to him” when Jesus is transfigured.

- ◆ **How do we listen to God? What has stopped us from listening to God? How can I take him at his word and “listen to him”?**
- ◆ **How often do we use technology to “download” something that will draw us closer to God?**

There is an art to listening. It includes silence, attention to the one speaking and an undistracted heart. *with a prayer resource, with silence, in prayer with one another, in the chapel with Jesus in the Eucharist...*

- ◆ These prayer “tools” are equivalents to what “download” to our hearts and minds: **What listening tools work best for me in my situation? Do I have a prayer resource I can share with others?**



Third Sunday of Lent

March 4, 2018

GOSPEL [JOHN 2:13-25](#)

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said,

"Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace."

His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me. At this the Jews answered and said to him,

"What sign can you show us for doing this?"

Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."

The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?"

But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.





March 4, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 2:13-25



In one way or another, we all seek to ‘connect’ with others. In today’s culture we are quite connected – perhaps even **over** connected in this digital age. It used to be that when you went home, your work was done. Why don’t more people just disconnect? They’re afraid that if they do, they’ll miss something important.

- ◆ **How strongly do you feel about your connection with God? Do you fret when you miss a Sunday service the way you fuss when your internet service goes down for a couple of hours?**

In the Gospel reading Jesus overturns the money changers in the Temple. He was upset because he saw in the Temple becoming a source of deterioration for the relationship with His Father. To fulfill the Passover traditions, a marketplace outside of Temple would not have been unusual – a place where travelers could buy the sacrificial lamb or calf or dove. But it had been corrupted. It had become elite—a-pay-your-way-to-the-Lord. Jesus, knowing humanity, knew he would have to show a new way—the cross—to re-connect. Jesus reminds us in a dramatic way how precious is God’s Temple and place of “connection” with the divine. Jesus wanted to keep the temple as a source of connection to the divine.

The Good News is that Christ is among us – and He so wants to be with you, that he will turn the tables and seek us through our distractions.

- ◆ **If Jesus were to come into your life right now, what would need to be overturned to protect your time for the most important things...things that define who you are as a Catholic? i.e, prayer time and your sacramental life? family time to include meaningful conversations and “down” time with leisure as a family? Other-centered time for serving those outside our family, especially the needy around us.**

A PRAYER FOR LENT

God, heavenly Father, source of all blessings look upon me and hear my prayer during this holy season of Lent. By the good works You inspire, help me to listen to You and be renewed in spirit.

For without You, I can do nothing.

Father of love, source of all blessings, nourish me with your word of life.

Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness. Give me new life by your sacraments.

For without You, I can do nothing.

Father of love, source of all blessings, fill my heart and help me to pass from my old life of sin to the new life of grace.

For without You, I can do nothing.

I ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

Amen.



Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday)

March 11, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.





March 11, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 3:14-21



The fourth weekend of Lent is known as “Laetare Sunday”. Similar to the Advent “Gaudete Sunday” two weeks before the great feast of Christmas, this weekend is reminding us we are nearing the great feast of salvation—Easter. This is cause to rejoice.

Sometimes, what stands in our way of making a strong connection to Jesus is how we see ourselves. **Do we loathe some physical part of ourselves? Our gender? Our skin color? Our weight? Our height? Our physical features. Advertisers know the secret to selling products lies in creating discomfort with our present condition. Am I comfortable with myself and how God made me? Or do I wish I was someone else? With a different body? A different....? Share if you would like.**

The good news is that that our discomfort is only our view, not God’s. Think about that – from God’s perspective he made you his son or daughter, a creature immeasurably loved and wanted. He loves you no matter what. He would still have brought Jesus here for you, no matter what. Take his lead. Seek His light over your darkness. He is reaching down for a connection to you to be that source of power because we all need him.

Let’s take a look at what is blocking our connection with God through our spiritual state. **Do I continually get discouraged when I fall into sin? Or do I not care that I sin? Do I balance my spiritual efforts with leaning more and more on God’s grace to accomplish any good in me? Pope Francis’s compared the church to a “field hospital in wartime”, not a museum for saints.**

If I feel the weight of my sins and come to the Church-field hospital, I am in the right place. Time is drawing near. Plug in. **Watch video that was played at Mass this weekend:**

Video Link

English: vimeo.com/255888723

Spanish: vimeo.com/255889390

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Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness. Give me new life by your sacraments.

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Father of love, source of all blessings, fill my heart and help me to pass from my old life of sin to the new life of grace.

For without You, I can do nothing.

I ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

Amen.



Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 18, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 12:20-33

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus."

Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.

Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.





March 18, 2018

GOSPEL JOHN 12:20-33



We can be “charged with Christ” when “[he] places his law within me and write it upon my heart”. **What do you think this means? How will God write his law upon our hearts?**

If we are to be fully charged in our faith, what are some things we must do?

Recall the gospel text: “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life”. And “unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit”. **So, as disciples of Christ, what does this ask of us? What in our lives is holding us back from bearing fruit.** Only dead seeds, buried in the earth, can provide a harvest. It is a paradox, Death is a way OF life and Death is the way TO life.

This is a basic principle of life: A certain kind of death is required to bring something else to life. Die to sin so good can prevail. We need to be born anew in baptism. We need to die to ourselves and our selfishness.

So much of the Lenten journey is intended to do just that: help us give things up that aren’t bad or wrong, but may not be the best use of time or talent, of energy and passion.

Think of the catalogue of little things to which to die: gossiping, complaining, profanity, angry outbursts, wasting time, looking at inappropriate stuff on the internet, drinking too much, eating too much, eating too much of the wrong things. **In what ways are you living your life with stuff that might very well be keeping you from being close to family, serving others, modeling Jesus.**

Another way to say this: what darkness in our life must change to let the light of Jesus in?

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