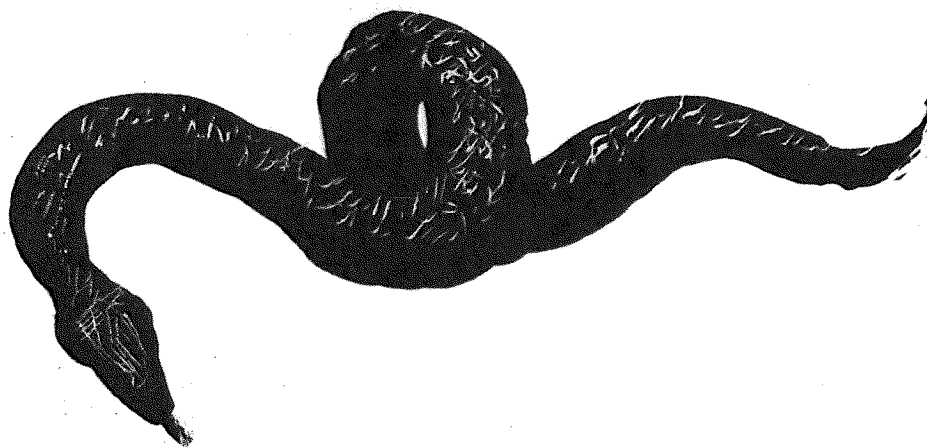


1ST SUNDAY OF LENT
✠ YEAR C ✠

RESISTING TEMPTATION



READINGS FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

- Deuteronomy 26:4-10 -

Moses spoke to the people, saying: "The priest shall receive the basket from you and shall set it in front of the altar of the LORD, your God. Then you shall declare before the LORD, your God, 'My father was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien. But there he became a nation great, strong, and numerous. When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and he heard our cry and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. He brought us out of Egypt with his strong hand and outstretched arm, with terrifying power, with signs and wonders; and bringing us into this country, he gave us this land flowing with milk and honey. Therefore I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O LORD, have given me.' And having set them before the LORD, your God, you shall bow down in his presence."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 -

R: **Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.**

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
say to the LORD, "My refuge and fortress, My God in whom I trust."

R:

No evil shall befall you, nor shall affliction come near your tent,
for to his angels he has given command about you, that they guard you in all your ways.

R:

Upon their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

You shall tread upon the asp and the viper;
you shall trample down the lion and the dragon.

R:

Because he clings to me, I will deliver him; I will set him on high because
he acknowledges my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in distress; I will deliver him and glorify him.

R:

SECOND READING

- Romans 10:8-13 -

Brothers and sisters: What does Scripture say? The word is near you, / in your mouth and in your heart / —that is, the word of faith that we preach— for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. For the Scripture says No one who believes in him will be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, enriching all who call upon him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

GOSPEL

- Luke 4:1-13 -

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, One does not live on bread alone." Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours if you worship me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve." Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone." Jesus said to him in reply, "It also says, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test." When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.



OPENING PRAYER

Hear my words, O Lord; listen to my sighing.

Hear my cry for help, my king, my God!

To you I pray, O Lord; at dawn you will hear my cry;
at dawn I will be pleased before you and wait.

You are not a god who delights in evil;
no wicked person finds refuge with you;
the arrogant cannot stand before you.

You hate all who do evil...

But I can enter your house because of your great love.

I can worship in your holy temple

because of my reverence for you, Lord.

Guide me in your justice because of my foes;
make straight your way before me. Amen.

—Psalm 5:1-6, 8-9

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE



Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ MEDITATION

In what three ways did Satan tempt Jesus, and how does Satan use these same tactics to tempt us today?

Jesus responded to temptation using the Word of God. How are the Scriptures an important weapon and defense in our battle against temptation?

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Prayerfully put yourself in today's Gospel reading. Imagine that you are present in the desert; you witness Satan tempting Jesus and Jesus faithfully resisting each of the three temptations. Next imagine that each temptation is presented directly to you. The devil tells you that (1) you are not really a child of God; (2) you can have anything you want in the world by turning away from God, and (3) you don't have to follow God's plan for your life but can choose an easier way instead. How would you respond to each of these temptations?

RESOLUTION: Prayerfully consider which of these temptations is most difficult for you to resist. Why is it? What can you do this week to resist this temptation more in your life?

"This is why Christ vanquished the Tempter for us: 'For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sinning' (Hebrews 4:15). By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert."—CCC, 540

Monday

Reread last Sunday's first reading from Deuteronomy 26:4-10. This passage is a summary of Israel's identity—a chosen nation, ransomed by God. How does this passage help you be more secure and confident in your identity—a child of God, chosen and ransomed?

"It is better to be the child of God than king of the whole world." —St. Aloysius Gonzaga

Monday

In last Sunday's Gospel reading we hear Jesus quoting Deuteronomy 6:16: "You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test" (Luke 4:12). In what ways have you tested God in the past? In your prayer time today, ask for the grace to be humble and obedient rather than putting God to the test in the future.

"By obeying we raise ourselves beyond our littleness and we can act in conformity with an infinite wisdom....Through obedience we become infinitely powerful." —St. Maximilian Kolbe

Wednesday

In last Sunday's second reading, St. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30:14 saying, "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart—that is, the word of faith that we preach" (Romans 10:8). What can you do this week to consciously keep the Word of God in your mouth and in your heart?

"Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life."—Pope Benedict XVI

Thursday

In last Sunday's first reading from Deuteronomy 26:4-10, we read about how the Israelites were commanded to bring their first fruits before God. How can you offer God your "first fruits" this week?

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow."

—Proverbs 3:9-10

Friday

Last Sunday's second reading from Romans 10:8-13 reminds us that faith is a matter both for private conviction and public profession and action: "For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved" (Romans 10:10). Are you both believing in your heart and confessing with your mouth? What can you do to improve in either or both areas?

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."

—Matthew 7:21

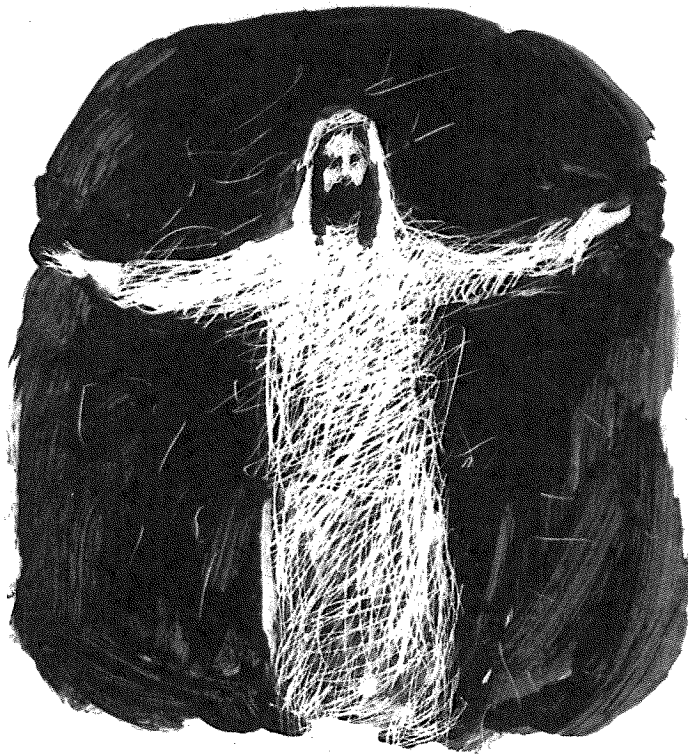
Saturday

The responsorial psalm from last Sunday tells us, "for to his angels he has given command about you, that they guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11). When have you experienced the protection of your guardian angel? How can you be more aware of this constant guard over you?

"When tempted, invoke your Angel. He is more eager to help you than you are to be helped! Ignore the devil and do not be afraid of him; he trembles and flees at the sight of your Guardian Angel." —St. John Bosco

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT
✠ YEAR C ✠

LONGING FOR GLORY



READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

- Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18 -

The Lord God took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be." Abram put his faith in the LORD, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness.

He then said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." "O Lord God," he asked, "how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He answered him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Abram brought him all these, split them in two, and placed each half opposite the other; but the birds he did not cut up. Birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but Abram stayed with them. As the sun was about to set, a trance fell upon Abram, and a deep, terrifying darkness enveloped him.

When the sun had set and it was dark, there appeared a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch, which passed between those pieces. It was on that occasion that the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the Great River, the Euphrates."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14 -

R: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom should I fear?

The LORD is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid?

R:

Hear, O LORD, the sound of my call; have pity on me, and answer me.

Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks.

R:

Your presence, O LORD, I seek.

Hide not your face from me; do not in anger repel your servant.

You are my helper: cast me not off.

R:

I believe that I shall see the bounty of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD with courage; be stouthearted, and wait for the LORD.

R:

SECOND READING

- Philippians 3:17-4:1 -

[Shorter Form is indented in brackets]

Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers and sisters, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you, and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things.

[But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord.]

GOSPEL

- Luke 9:28b-36 -

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.



OPENING PRAYER

“O God, thou art my God,
I seek thee,
my soul thirsts for thee;
my flesh faints for thee,
as in a dry and weary land
where no water is.

So I have looked upon thee in the sanctuary,
beholding thy power and glory.

Because thy steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise thee.”—Psalm 63:1-3 (RSV)

Father, you revealed your chosen Son to his disciples,
giving them a glimpse of that glory which he had with you
from the beginning,
a foretaste of the glory he was to bring about
by the exodus he would accomplish in Jerusalem.

As we reflect on your Word,
open our hearts to an ardent longing for that same glory
promised to us who seek your face day after day.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE



Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ MEDITATION

In the Gospel reading for this week, we are told that Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him up Mount Tabor to pray.

Why do you think Jesus took these three with him this time when he often went out alone to pray?

The Gospel passage makes it clear that the Transfiguration took place within the context of prayer: “While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.” Jesus’ appearance was changed while he was praying.

What kind of changes have you experienced in your life as a result of prayer—either while you have been praying or after you started to cultivate a habit of prayer?

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Prayerfully place yourself in today's Gospel reading. Imagine being one of the three apostles who had been chosen to ascend Mount Tabor with Jesus. If you had been one of the apostles, you would have seen Jesus practically every day for about three years following him in his public ministry. But now, you see Jesus like never before—transfigured and radiant in glory. Suddenly, in the midst of this extraordinary revelation of Jesus, a voice from heaven speaks. It is God the Father, saying “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him” (RSV). The one command the heavenly Father gives you in this most amazing moment of divine revelation is to listen to Jesus, his Son. Take time now in prayer to consider what ways Jesus may want you to listen to him more in your life.

RESOLUTION: Responding to the Father's command to “listen” to Jesus, come up with one specific resolution you can make this week to help you listen more closely to Jesus.

“And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.”

—John 1:14

Monday

In yesterday's Gospel reading we heard God commanding us, "This is my chosen Son, listen to him" (Luke 9:35). How can you listen more attentively to Jesus this week?

*"Listen carefully my son, to the master's instructions
and attend to them with the ear of your heart."*

—St. Benedict

Tuesday

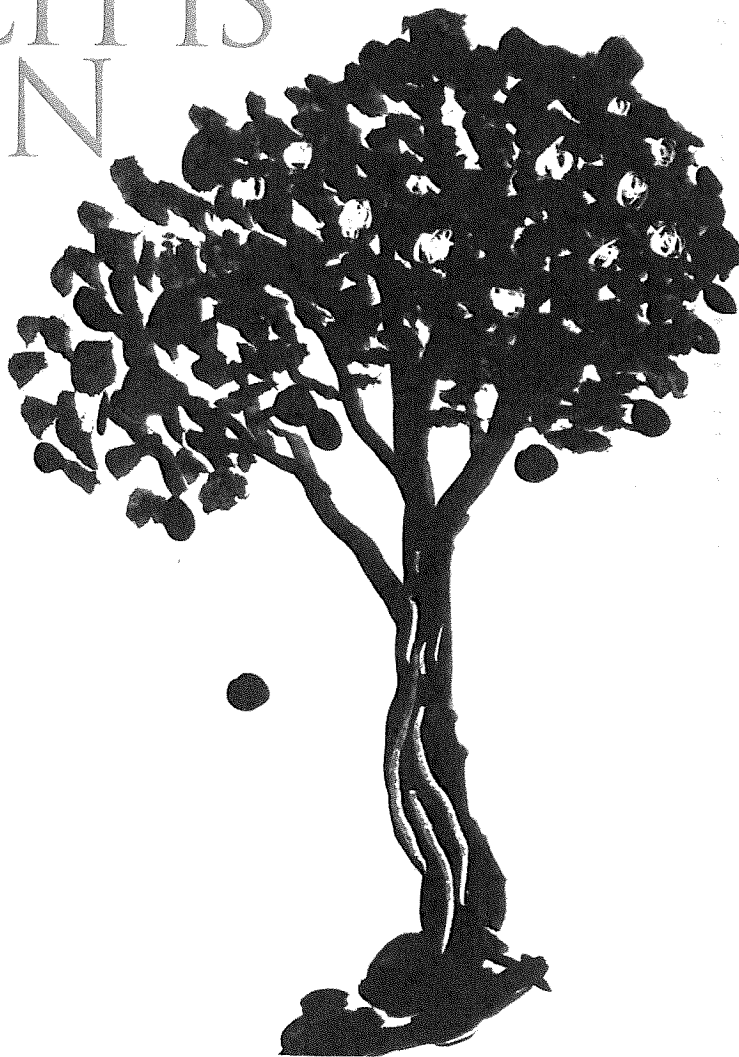
In Sunday's first reading from Genesis, God tells Abram that it was he who "brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession" (Genesis 15:7). God is stating here both his promise and his purpose for Abram. Ultimately, God's promise and his purpose for you are the same — life with himself. As you pray, ask God to clarify how he wants you to attain both ends, and to reflect that in your conduct this week.

*"You yourself encourage [man] to delight in your
praise, for you have made us for yourself, and our
heart is restless until it rests in you."*

—St. Augustine, Confessions

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT
✠ YEAR C ✠

TO WHOM
MUCH IS
GIVEN



READINGS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

~ Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15 ~

Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. Leading the flock across the desert, he came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There an angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in fire flaming out of a bush. As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire, was not consumed. So Moses decided, "I must go over to look at this remarkable sight and see why the bush is not burned."

When the Lord saw him coming over to look at it more closely, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "Here I am." God said, "Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your fathers," he continued, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. But the Lord said, "I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers, so I know well what they are suffering. Therefore I have come down to rescue them from the hands of the Egyptians and lead them out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey."

Moses said to God, "But when I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' if they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I tell them?" God replied, "I am who am." Then he added, "This is what you shall tell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you."

God spoke further to Moses, "Thus shall you say to the Israelites: The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. "This is my name forever; thus am I to be remembered through all generations.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

~ Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11 ~

R: 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:

He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills.

He redeems your life from destruction,
crowns you with kindness and compassion.

R:

The Lord secures justice and the rights of all the oppressed.

He has made known his ways to Moses, and his deeds to the children of Israel.

R:

Merciful and gracious is the Lord, slow to anger and abounding in kindness.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him.

R:

SECOND READING

- 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12 -

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and all of them were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. All ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was the Christ. Yet God was not pleased with most of them, for they were struck down in the desert. These things happened as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil things, as they did.

Do not grumble as some of them did, and suffered death by the destroyer. These things happened to them as an example, and they have been written down as a warning to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore, whoever thinks he is standing secure should take care not to fall.

GOSPEL

- Luke 13:1-9 -

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus said to them in reply, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!"

And he told them this parable: "There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, 'For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?' He said to him in reply, 'Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.'"



OPENING PRAYER

Liberating God,
in love you have set us free:
free from slavery to sin and self,
free to know and love you,
free to follow and serve you.

We praise you for your faithful love toward us,
and for the many ways you have demonstrated
that love to us.

We see your love in the natural world around us—
in the sky and trees and rivers.

We see your love in the gift of
your commandments—
the rules for living that guide us into right
relationship with you,
and with the people around us.

And we see your love in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died to bring us life.

Because we have experienced your love,
we come before you with confidence,
bringing our needs and the needs of our world.
God, in your unfailing love, hear our prayer. Amen.

—Adapted from <http://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/prayers-of-people-october-2-2011.html>

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE



Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ MEDITATION

In the second reading, St. Paul tells his readers that all of the Exodus generation saw the mighty works of God, but that most of the Exodus generation fell away. What was the reason for this?

What lesson might we take away from this?

Why did some of the Exodus generation want to go back to Egypt even after they had been set free?

Have you ever wanted to return to an old way of life that you had already left behind?

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Put yourself in today's Gospel reading and imagine that you hear Jesus talking about the fig tree that didn't bear fruit but was allowed to live another year. Imagine that he is saying those words to you. If you were given one more year to bear fruit, what sorts of things would you do?

RESOLUTION: In what areas of your spiritual or moral life have you found yourself tempted to be like Israel and want to "turn back"? What can you do to persevere so that you can bear more fruit in your life? Ask Jesus to show you where you need to make changes in your life in order to become a fruitful fig tree.

"The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to 'the slavery of sin.'" —CCC 1733

Monday

This Sunday's readings all have to do with the Old Testament Exodus story, in which God freed his chosen people from their captivity in Egypt. What things enslave you in your everyday life? Your job? Relationships? Financial debt? What are some ways you can surrender these things to God and allow him to set you free?

"This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: Every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of the believers so that they may conform their lives to them." —CCC 1363

Tuesday

In Sunday's Gospel reading from Luke 13:1-9, Jesus tells the parable of the barren fig tree. What do you think the meaning of this parable is? What are some things in your life that "choke" your spiritual life? What can you do to help bear more fruit in your faith life?

"You are my hope, Lord; my trust, God, from my youth."

—Psalm 71:5

Wednesday

In Sunday's video, the presenter mentions that many of the Jewish people were hiding behind the temple, saying that despite their sinful actions, they were "good enough" because of their adherence to temple rituals. What are some of the ways we merely go through the motions of our faith and settle for being "good enough"? How can you live your faith more fully and with conviction?

"The call for a sincere gift of self is the fullest way to realize our personal freedom." —St. Teresa of Avila

Thursday

This Sunday's first and second readings both had to do with the Exodus story. Elsewhere in his letters, St. Paul compares sin to a "taskmaster" like the ones lording over the Israelite slaves in the Exodus story. In what ways does sin enslave us? How can you, especially during this season of Lent, turn away from sin and toward God?

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery....For you were called to freedom...only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another."

—Galatians 5:1, 13 (RSV)

Friday

In Sunday's second reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (10:1-6, 10-12), he reminds his listeners that "all" who came out of Egypt in the Old Testament experienced God's amazing graces, but that "most" of them still fell to great sin. In what ways have we failed to recognize the great gifts that God has given us?

"He is generous even to exhaustion; and what is most wonderful is, that he gives himself thus entirely, not once only, but every day, if we wish it. Every fresh Communion is a new gift which Jesus Christ makes of himself."

—St. Ignatius Loyola

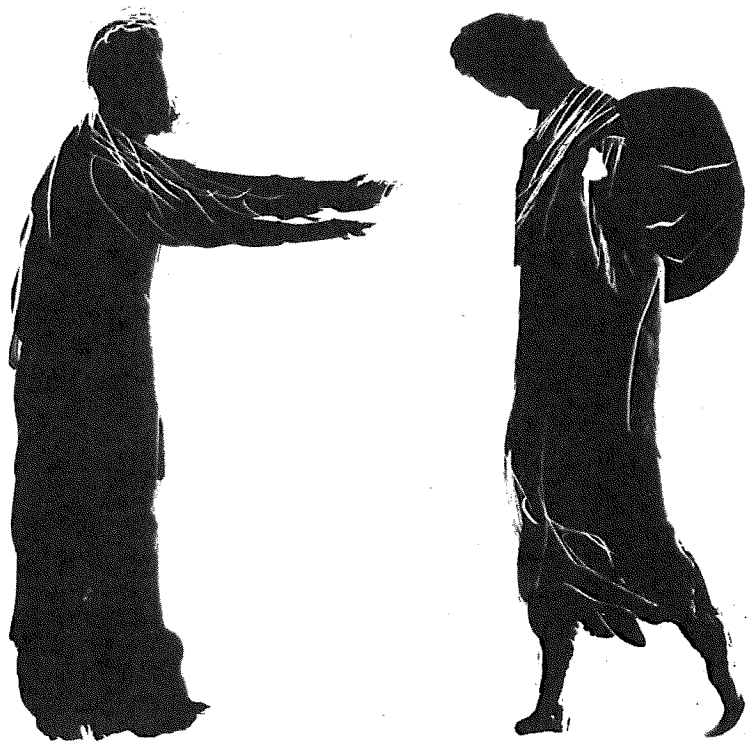
Saturday

In Sunday's first reading from the Book of Exodus (3:1-8, 13-15), God says that "I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers, so I know well what they are suffering." How can God understand our personal sufferings today? How can we entrust them to him?

"Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life."—Romans 6:3-4

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT
✠ YEAR C ✠

A TALE OF TWO SONS



READINGS FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

- Joshua 5:9a, 10-12 -

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have removed the reproach of Egypt from you."

While the Israelites were encamped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, they celebrated the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth of the month. On the day after the Passover, they ate of the produce of the land in the form of unleavened cakes and parched grain. On that same day after the Passover, on which they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. No longer was there manna for the Israelites, who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 -

R: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth.

Let my soul glory in the Lord; the lowly will hear me and be glad.

R:

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:

Look to him that you may be radiant with joy, and your faces may not blush with shame.

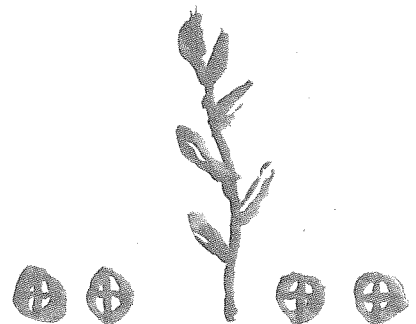
When the poor one called out, the Lord heard, and from all his distress he saved him.

R:

SECOND READING

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 -

Brothers and sisters: Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold new things have come. And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.



GOSPEL

- Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 -

Tax 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 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.'"



OPENING PRAYER

Out of the depths I call to you, Lord; Lord, hear my cry!

May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

If you, Lord, mark our sins, Lord, who can stand?

But with you is found forgiveness and so you are revered.

I wait with longing for the Lord, my soul waits for his word.

My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak.

More than sentinels for daybreak, let Israel look for the Lord,

For with the Lord is kindness, with him is full redemption,

And God will redeem Israel from all their sins. Amen.

—Psalm 130

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE



Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ MEDITATION

The presenter shared some of the historical background for this familiar story. What are some things about the story of the prodigal son that would have been shocking to Jesus' audience in the first century?

In this story the younger son looked for happiness by squandering his money in a “distant country” (Luke 15:13). What are some ways we look for happiness in things that don’t really satisfy?

In the story we see that the older son served his father obediently, but without joy. In what ways have you ever viewed God as a master rather than a loving father?

How can we guard against this?

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Take time now to consider your relationship with your heavenly Father. Prayerfully place yourself in the Gospel story. First imagine that you are the younger son leaving home, squandering your inheritance in a distant land, and ending up destitute, starving, and alone. How do you feel? What do you say to yourself? What do you do? Next imagine you are the older son dutifully working at home but not recognizing the love and generosity of your father. Now decide with which son you identify more at this point in your life. Put yourself in the position of that particular son and imagine the father coming out to meet you and inviting you into the feast. What would you say in response? How do you feel when your brother appears on the scene?

RESOLUTION: Just like the father in the parable, our heavenly Father comes out to us and invites us into his love. In prayer, talk to God about what he is inviting you to do to go deeper into your relationship with him this week.

“When God runs toward us, we cannot keep silent, but with St. Paul we exclaim: Abba Pater, Father, my Father! For, though he is the creator of the universe, he doesn’t mind our not using high-sounding titles, nor worry about our not acknowledging his greatness. He wants us to call him Father, he wants us to savor that word, our souls filling with joy.” —St. Josemaria Escriva

Monday

In Sunday's first reading from the book of Joshua, the Lord tells Joshua and the Israelites that he has "removed the reproach of Egypt" from them (Joshua 5:9). In your prayer time, consider the reproach of sin that God has removed from you. Take time to thank him for his forgiveness.

"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." —Isaiah 1:18

Tuesday

Reread last Sunday's responsorial psalm from Psalm 34:2-7. As you meditate on these verses, ask God how he wants you to taste and see his goodness in a particular way this week.

"Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks 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." —Matthew 7:9-11

Wednesday

In Sunday's second reading from 2 Corinthians, St. Paul implores us to "be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20). Ask God to show you if there is any unresolved sin in your life concerning which you need to be reconciled to him.

"God created us without us: but he did not will to save us without us.' To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults....'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins.'"—CCC 1847

Thursday

Consider the father in last Sunday's Gospel reading of the prodigal son (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32). He ran to meet his younger son and welcome him home; he was quick to forgive, despite having been insulted and abandoned by his son. Prayerfully consider whether there is anyone who has offended you, either recently or in the past, whom you still need to forgive. Pray for the grace to forgive and let go of the hurt.

"If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions." —Matthew 6:14-15

Friday

Reread last Sunday's second reading from 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. St. Paul speaks of a "ministry of reconciliation"—ask God how he is calling you to participate in this ministry as an ambassador of Christ this week.

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now."

—St Teresa of Avila

Saturday

Consider the theme of repentance throughout last Sunday's readings, especially the second reading (2 Corinthians 5:17-21) and the Gospel reading (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32). Take some time in your prayer to make an examination of conscience based on the two sons in the Gospel reading: How have I squandered the gifts God has given me? How have I dishonored or insulted God? How have I removed myself from God's presence? How have I gone through the motions without being aware of God's love for me?

"Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin; all hope consists in confession; in confession there is a chance for mercy."

—Romans 6:3-4

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT
✠ YEAR C ✠

MERCY AND CONVERSION



READINGS FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING

- Isaiah 43:16-21 -

Thus says the Lord,/ who opens a way in the sea/ and a path in the mighty waters,/ who leads out chariots and horsemen,/ a powerful army,/ till they lie prostrate together, never to rise,/ snuffed out and quenched like a wick./ Remember not the events of the past,/ the things of long ago consider not;/ see, I am doing something new!/ Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?/ In the desert I make a way,/ in the wasteland, rivers./ Will beasts honor me,/ jackals and ostriches,/ for I put water in the desert/ and rivers in the wasteland/ for my chosen people to drink,/ the people whom I formed for myself/ that they might announce my praise.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6 -

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter; and our tongue with rejoicing.

R:

Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad indeed.

R:

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the torrents in the southern desert.

Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing.

R:

Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown,
they shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.

R:

SECOND READING

- Philippians 3:8-14 -

Brothers and sisters: I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on faith to know him and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL

~ John 8:1-11 ~

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 anymore."

Sunday

OPENING PRAYER

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
 Body of Christ, save me.
 Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
 Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
 O Good Jesus, hear me.
 Within your wounds conceal me.
 Do not permit me to be parted from you.
 From the evil foe protect me.
 At the hour of my death call me.
 And bid me come to you,
 to praise you with all your saints,
 Forever and ever. Amen.

—Anima Christi

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE

Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.



LECTIO DIVINA ☩ MEDITATION

In this Gospel reading, Jesus' responses to the Pharisees and the woman caught in adultery reveal how he wants to respond to us and help us live our lives as his disciples.

How are the Pharisees trying to trap Jesus? How does Jesus' response to the Pharisees show his great wisdom?

Think of a time that you experienced sinfulness in your own life. How does Jesus' response to the woman reflect his mercy and the way Jesus desires to deal with your sinfulness?

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Think of a sin that you have committed or an embarrassing weakness that you would not want others to know about. Now imagine yourself in the position of the woman in today's Gospel reading. Imagine that it is your sin that the Pharisees are revealing to the crowds and condemning. How would you feel in that situation? Then imagine Jesus approaching you with compassion and saying "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more." How would you respond to Jesus' mercy? What would you say to him? How would you act differently?

RESOLUTION: Jesus offers the woman in today's Gospel reading—and all of us—both mercy and the challenge to "go and sin no more." Talk to God about one practical thing you could do this week to avoid a sin that troubles you and turn more readily to his mercy and grace.

"If self-knowledge and the thought of sin are not seasoned with the remembrance of the blood and hope for mercy, the result is bound to be confusion." —St. Catherine of Sienna

Monday

Sunday's Gospel reading about the woman caught in adultery focused our attention on God's mercy. Place yourself before a crucifix and spend a few minutes meditating upon Jesus' sacrifice to free us from our sins. What does the crucifix reveal about your sin? about the mercy of God? Spend some time entrusting yourself to Christ and his great mercy, and hand over to him anything in your life that needs healing and forgiveness.

"The human heart is converted by looking upon him whom our sins have pierced."—CCC 1432



Reread the second reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (3:8-14). How can you keep Jesus always in front of you as you live your life this week? How can you continue to pursue the goal St. Paul speaks about?

"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." —2 Timothy 4:7-8

Wednesday

In the Sunday Gospel reading, we saw the Pharisees' willingness to judge and condemn the woman for her sin. Do you judge others and rush to judgment? If you do, ask God to help you change your behavior this week.

"Fear brings us only to justice as it is shown to sinners, but that is not the justice Jesus will have for those who love him."—St. Thérèse of Lisieux

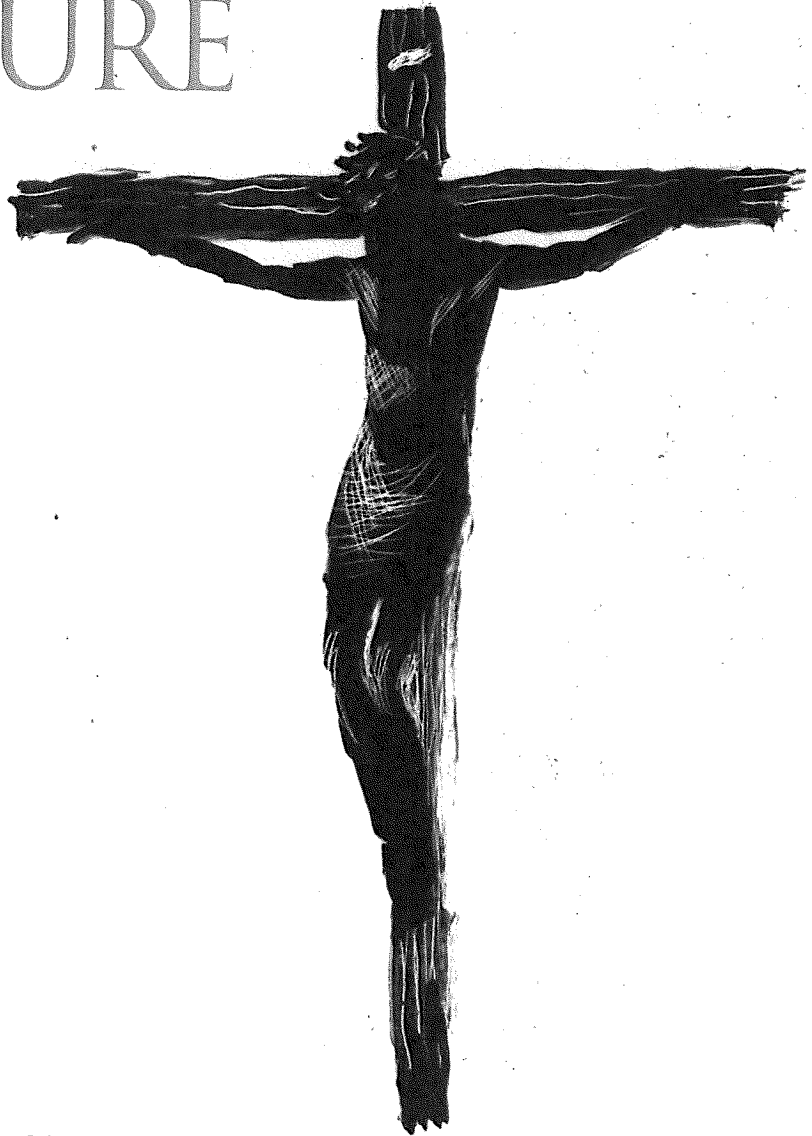
Thursday

Read the responsorial psalm from Sunday's reading, Psalm 126. As we saw in the Gospel reading, one of the most wonderful deeds that God can do in our lives is forgive our sins. What are some marvelous things God has done in your life? Spend some time in praise and thanksgiving to God for these gifts.

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."—1 Thessalonians 5:18 (RSV)

PALM SUNDAY
THE PASSION OF THE LORD
✠ YEAR C ✠

FAITHFULNESS
UNDER
PRESSURE



READINGS FOR PALM SUNDAY

FIRST READING

- Isaiah 50:4-7 -

The Lord GOD has given me/ a well-trained tongue,/ that I might know how to speak to the weary/ a word that will rouse them./ Morning after morning/ he opens my ear that I may hear;/ and I have not rebelled,/ have not turned back./ I gave my back to those who beat me,/ my cheek to those who plucked my beard;/ my face I did not shield/ from buffets and spitting./ The Lord God is my help,/ therefore I am not disgraced;/ I have set my face like flint,/ knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 -

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads:
"He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him."

R:

Indeed, many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;
they have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones.

R:

They divide my garments among them, and for my vestures they cast lots.
But you, O LORD, be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me.

R:

I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:
"You who fear the LORD, praise him; all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

R:

SECOND READING

- Philippians 2:6-11 -

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,/ did not regard equality with God/ something to be grasped./ Rather, he emptied himself,/ taking the form of a slave,/ coming in human likeness;/ and found human in appearance,/ he humbled himself,/ becoming obedient to the point of death,/ even death on a cross./ Because of this, God greatly exalted him/ and bestowed on him the name/ which is above every name,/ that at the name of Jesus/ every knee should bend,/ of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,/ and every tongue confess that/ Jesus Christ is Lord,/ to the glory of God the Father.

GOSPEL

- Luke 22:14-23:56 -

[Shorter Form is indented in brackets]

(Narrator is in bold text)

When the hour came, Jesus took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them.

"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said,

"Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you that from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Then he took the bread, said a blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying,

"This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me."

And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying,

"This is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you. And yet behold, the hand of the one who is to betray me is with me on the table; for the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed."

And they began to debate among themselves who among them would do such a deed.

Then an argument broke out among them about which of them should be regarded as the greatest. He said to them,

"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them and those in authority over them are addressed as 'Benefactors'; but among you it shall not be so. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one seated at table? I am among you as the one who serves. It is you who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father had conferred one on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan had demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers."

He said to him,

"Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and to die with you."

But he replied,

"I tell you, Peter; before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me."

He said to them,

"When I sent you forth without a money bag or a sack or sandals, were you in need of anything?"

"No, nothing," they replied.

He said to them,

"But now one who has a money bag should take it, and likewise a sack, and one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one. For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me, namely, He was counted among the wicked; and indeed what is written about me is coming to fulfillment."

Then they said,

"Lord, look, there are two swords here."

But he replied,

"It is enough!"

Then going out, he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them,

"Pray that you may not undergo the test."

After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying,

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done."

And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground. When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them,

"Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."

While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him,

"Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked,

"Lord, shall we strike with a sword?"

And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said in reply,

"Stop, no more of this!"

Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him. And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him,

"Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for the power of darkness."

After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; Peter was following at a distance. They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them. When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said,

"This man too was with him."

But he denied it saying,

"Woman, I do not know him."

A short while later someone else saw him and said,

"You too are one of them,"

but Peter answered,

"My friend, I am not."

About an hour later, still another insisted,

"Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean."

But Peter said,

"My friend, I do not know what you are talking about."

Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed, and the Lord turned and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him,

"Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times."

He went out and began to weep bitterly. The men who held Jesus in custody were ridiculing and beating him. They blindfolded him and questioned him, saying,

"Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?"

And they reviled him in saying many other things against him.

When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin. They said,

"If you are the Christ, tell us,"

but he replied to them,

"If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond."

But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

They all asked,

"Are you then the Son of God?"

He replied to them,

"You say that I am."

Then they said,

"What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth."

Then the whole assembly of them [The elders of the people, chief priests and scribes, arose and brought him [Jesus] before Pilate. They brought charges against him, saying,

"We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Christ, a king."

Pilate asked him,

"Are you the king of the Jews?"

He said to him in reply,

"You say so."

Pilate then addressed the chief priests and the crowds,

"I find this man not guilty."

But they were adamant and said,

"He is inciting the people with his teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to here."

On hearing this Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean; and upon learning that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod who was in Jerusalem at that time. Herod was very glad to see Jesus; he had been wanting to see him for a long time, for he had heard about him and had been hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at length, but he gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes, meanwhile, stood by accusing him harshly. Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, and after clothing him in resplendent garb, he sent him back to Pilate. Herod and Pilate became friends that very day, even though they had been enemies formerly. Pilate then summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them,

"You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him."

But all together they shouted out,

"Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us."

—Now Barabbas had been imprisoned for a rebellion that had taken place in the city and for murder.—

Again Pilate addressed them, still wishing to release Jesus, but they continued their shouting,

"Crucify him, Crucify him!"

Pilate addressed them a third time,

"What evil has this man done? I found him guilty of no capital crime. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him."

With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted.

So he released the man who had been imprisoned for rebellion and murder, for whom they asked, and he handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they wished.

As they led him they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him.

Jesus turned to them and said,

"Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?"

Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said,

"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said,

"He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Christ of God."

Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out,

"If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself."

Above him there was an inscription that read, "This is the King of the Jews."

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying,

"Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us."

The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply,

"Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal."

Then he said,

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

He replied to him,

"Amen I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit;"

and when he had said this he breathed his last.

(Here all kneel and pause for short time.)

The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said,

"This man was innocent beyond doubt."

When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.]

Now there was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimethea and was awaiting the kingdom of God.

He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb in which no one had yet been buried. It was the day of preparation, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

The women who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils.

Then they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.



OPENING PRAYER

Look down upon me good and gentle Jesus,
while before thy face I humbly kneel
and with burning soul pray and beseech thee
to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith,
hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins
and a firm purpose of amendment,
while I contemplate with great love and tender pity
thy five wounds, pondering over them within me
and calling to mind the words which David,
Thy prophet said of thee, my Jesus,
“They have pierced my hands and my feet,
they have numbered all my bones.” Amen.

—Prayer Before a Crucifix

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE



Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.

LECTIO DIVINA ☩ MEDITATION

The presenter, Father John Riley, discussed how we find different roles in today's Gospel reading of the Passion story, some good and some bad. He mentioned characters who proved to be unfaithful during Christ's passion and others who serve as models we are called to emulate.

In the video, what characters and roles were described as part of the Passion story?

What additional roles did other characters play in the Passion narrative?

The Mass makes the events of Passion Week spiritually present to us—as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, the Mass is the “making present and the sacramental offering of [Christ’s] unique sacrifice” (CCC 1362). We are called to play an active role in this memorial of the Passion.

Consider again the various roles we’ve discussed and the characters we listed at the beginning.

What role(s) do you think you have played in the past?

What character do you identify with the most at this point in your life? Why?

LECTIO DIVINA ☞ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: In this study you have discussed the various roles in the Passion narrative, and you have considered with which character you can relate the most. Now in prayer, enter into the Passion narrative in your chosen role—the character from the Passion with whom you identify the most. Reread the parts of the Passion narrative in which your character appears and imagine being that person. How do you feel playing this part? How do you react to the events taking place? What do you say as the events unfold? Now imagine that Jesus sees you. What do you think he would say to you? What would you say to him?

RESOLUTION: Imagine that you are at the foot of the cross, gazing up at our crucified Lord. What are one or two practical things you can do this week to keep in mind the Passion events and remain a faithful follower of our Lord in the face of your daily challenges?

“Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed.” —Isaiah 53:4-5

Monday

Last Sunday's first reading from the prophet Isaiah describes courage in the face of persecution and ends with the verse "The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame" (Isaiah 50:7). For what current challenge in your life do you need to "set your face like flint"? Pray today for the grace to trust in God to provide the help you need.

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom do I fear?
The Lord is my life's refuge; of whom am I afraid?"—Psalm 27:1*

Tuesday

The response for last Sunday's responsorial psalm was, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (Psalm 22:2). Even though the psalmist trusts God and his mighty strength (Psalm 22:20, 23-24), he feels abandoned by God in times of trouble. When in your life have you felt abandoned by God? Looking back, how did God make his presence known even in that hard time?

*"But I cry out to you, Lord; in the morning my prayer
comes before you. Why do you reject me, Lord? Why hide
your face from me?"—2 Timothy 4:7-8*

Wednesday

Consider last Sunday's second reading from Philippians 2:6-11. St. Paul tells us that Jesus "did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather...he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death." If Jesus, who is God, did not exploit his divinity for gain but rather humbled himself for our sake, then in what way is God calling you to humble yourself for the sake of others this week?

"Humility does not disturb or disquiet or agitate, however great it may be; it comes with peace, delight, and calm....The pain of genuine humility doesn't agitate or afflict the soul; rather, this humility expands it and enables it to serve God more." —St. Teresa of Avila

Thursday

Reread last Sunday's first reading from Isaiah 50:4-7. Consider the people in your daily life; is there anyone who's weary and needs a word to rouse them, as the prophet says? How can you share the Word of God with that person this week with patience and charity?

"Encourage yourselves daily while it is still 'today,' so that none of you may grow hardened by the deceit of sin." —Hebrews 3:13

Friday

Reread the portion of last Sunday's Gospel reading found in Luke 23:44-49. Take some time to meditate on this account of Christ's death. What does it mean that the Son of God died for you, specifically?

*"God loves
each of us as if
there were only
one of us."*

—St. Augustine

Saturday

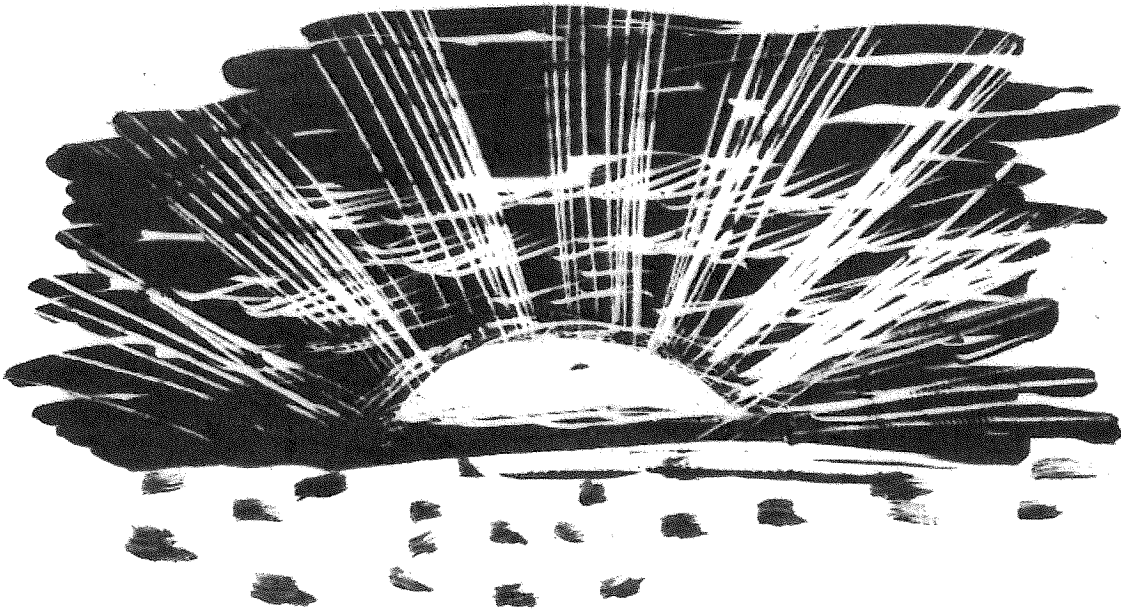
In last Sunday's Gospel reading, we hear Jesus praying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). In what way might God be calling you to surrender your will more to his?

*"Lord what wilt thou have me do? Behold the true sign of
a totally perfect soul: when one has reached the point of
giving up his will so completely that he no longer seeks,
expects, or desires to do ought but that which God wills."*

—St. Bernard

EASTER SUNDAY

✠ YEAR C ✠



FROM
SORROW
TO JOY

READINGS FOR EASTER SUNDAY

FIRST READING

- Acts 10:34a, 37-43 -

Peter proceeded to speak and said: "You know what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

- Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 -

R: This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

or R: **Alleluia**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

Let the house of Israel say, "His mercy endures forever."

R:

"The right hand of the LORD has struck with power;
the right hand of the LORD is exalted.

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD."

R:

The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes.

R:

SECOND READING

- Colossians 3:1-4 -

Brothers and sisters: If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.

OPTIONAL SECOND READING

- 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8 -

Brothers and sisters: Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

GOSPEL

- John 20:1-9 -

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.



OPENING PRAYER

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!

Exult, all creation around God's throne!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor,
radiant in the brightness of your King!

Christ has conquered! Glory fills you!

Darkness vanishes forever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!

The risen Savior shines upon you!

Let this place resound with joy,
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

—Exsultet

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ SACRED READING OF SCRIPTURE

Feel free to take notes on the video reflection in the space below.



LECTIO DIVINA ✠ MEDITATION

In his discussion of the Lord's Day, the presenter refers to the New Creation described at the beginning of the Gospel of John. How does this prologue of the Gospel of John connect to the story of creation from Genesis?

Why does John make this connection?

Christians gather on the Lord's Day to celebrate the greatest of God's saving works. Why do Christians gather on Sunday for worship when the Sabbath for the Jews was on Saturday?

How is this gathering meant to remind us of God's work in our own lives?

LECTIO DIVINA ✠ PRAYER & RESOLUTION

PRAYER: Place yourself in the footsteps of St. Mary Magdalene on Easter morning. You go to the tomb to anoint the dead body of the Master you loved and followed for so long. You approach the tomb in darkness and in great sorrow, remembering the suffering you watched Jesus endure on Good Friday. Now, as you encounter the resurrected Lord, what do you feel as you become aware that Jesus is truly alive and risen?

RESOLUTION: As you imagine being present at the joy of the Resurrection, ask Jesus what he would have you do with your life from this point on. Think of one “dark” or difficult area of your life, and ask him how you can replace that area of darkness with the light of the Resurrection or transform an area of sorrow into joy.

“Now let the heavens be joyful, Let earth her song begin; Let the round world keep triumph, And all that is therein; Invisible and visible, Their notes let all things blend, For Christ the Lord is risen; Our joy that hath no end.” —St. John of Damascus

Monday

This week the Catholic Church celebrates the Easter Octave, a weeklong celebration of the Feast of Easter. As you continue to celebrate your Easter feast, reflect on the immense gift of the Resurrection of the Lord and how we would not be Christians without it.

"And he departed from our sight that we might return to our heart, and there find him. For he departed, and behold, he is here."—St. Augustine

Monday

The Gospel passage states that the disciples "did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead" (John 20:9). Think of one aspect of the faith you have a difficult time understanding, and ask Jesus to illumine your mind and heart so that you can come to understand the fullness of the faith.

"Make no mistake: If he rose at all it was as his body; if the cells' dissolution did not reverse, the molecules reknit, the amino acids rekindle, the Church will fall." —John Updike

Wednesday

Reread the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 10:34a, 37-43). In this reading, Peter states that Jesus chose to show himself to witnesses chosen by God, the apostles, so that they may preach the message of Jesus to all the ends of the earth. Take some time to thank God for the gift of the Church and the courage of the apostles in spreading the message of Christ in the midst of immense persecution.

"Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song."—St Teresa of Avila

Thursday

In the second reading from St. Paul to the Colossians, Paul tells the faithful to "seek what is above" (Colossians 3:2). What does this mean for your life right now? How are you "seeking what is above" in your day-to-day activities?

"Faith in the resurrection of Jesus says that there is a future for every human being; the cry for unending life which is a part of the person is indeed answered... God exists: that is the real message of Easter. Anyone who even begins to grasp what this means also knows what it means to be redeemed."

—Pope Benedict XVI

Friday

In the Gospel reading from St. John, Peter arrives at the tomb second, yet is the first to enter. Peter's doubt and confusion holds him back initially, yet he is still the one chosen to lead the disciples into the tomb to encounter the crux of their faith: the Resurrection. In the same way, the Chair of Peter—the Pope—is called to lead all faithful today to an encounter with Jesus through the faith. Take some time reflecting on how you can better follow the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Father in your life.

"Sunday is the pre-eminent day for the liturgical assembly, when the faithful gather 'to listen to the word of God and take part in the Eucharist, thus calling to mind the Passion, Resurrection, and glory of the Lord Jesus, and giving thanks to God who 'has begotten them again, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead' unto a living hope."

—St. Augustine

Saturday

As you look back at your week, reflect on the ways you celebrated and rejoiced in the Resurrection of our Lord. What more can you do this Easter season to continually reflect on the gift of the Resurrection in your life?

"Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised." —Luke 24:5-6