From Ashes
Resurrection

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PRAYER FOR LENT

God, heavenly Father, look upon me and hear my prayer during this holy Season of Lent. Without You I can do nothing. By Your spirit, help me know what is right and to be eager in doing Your will. Keep me from sin and help me live by Your commandment of love. Send Your spirit to make me strong in faith and active in good works.

Lord, during this Lenten Season, nourish me with Your Word of life and make me one with You in love and prayer.

Fill my heart with Your love and keep me faithful to the Gospel of Christ. Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness. Give me new life by Your Sacraments, especially the Mass.

Father of love, source of all blessings, help me pass from my old life of sin to the new life of grace. Prepare me for the glory of Your Kingdom. I ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.



Today's reading from Joel begins with a foreshadowing of how we should conduct ourselves during Lent, and ends with how God responds. Fasting, weeping, mourning, and rending are not very uplifting words, nor do they sound inspiring. They sound depressing, painful, and harsh. However, when we think of them as God intended, they become a guide for our Lenten journey and how He wants us to return to Him: with our whole heart.

Rending our hearts can be distressing and painful. It causes disruption, which is the point. If there is a disruption, it can be the inspiration we need to make the change we need, renewing our hearts, so we can heal and move forward. In 2 Corinthians, St. Paul reminds us why we should want to rend our hearts: "to be reconciled to God." And then he tells us when we should do it: "Behold, now is a very acceptable time."

Our journey begins by looking inward. Matthew's Gospel tells us "But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you."

Dear Lord, disrupt my contrite heart so it can be made new and whole according to Your will for me. Help me

fast by giving up those things that need to decrease, in order that You may increase. Help me make room for only You. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus, who made it possible that I may one day be saved through His death and resurrection. Amen.



Roseann Mader

In Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 God speaks to the Israelites after they passed through the desert and were preparing to cross into the Promised Land. God's words are what we can repeat to ourselves every morning, "See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction". Each day, God gives us the freedom to make some powerful choices. Of course, we probably never think of our daily choices as particularly consequential in the overall mosaic of our life. However, the Lord gives us His simple formula for a joyous, prosperous life: love God, walk in His ways, and keep His commandments. I think this formula also includes loving our neighbor and maintaining a positive attitude of hope and gratitude, regardless of the circumstances.

God also gives us the opportunity to choose "death and destruction." Obviously, no one would knowingly make such a choice, but don't we make that choice when we carry resentments, embrace doubt and fear, or cling to anger and hatred? Allowing these destructive feelings and behaviors to dominate our lives robs us of the joy and love that God offers us daily. So, during Lent, let's follow the Lord's final admonition in Deuteronomy, "Now choose life that you and your children may live".

Heavenly Father, I thank You for the freedom You have given me to live my life as I choose, but I ask You to guide me in the choices I make. I pray the Holy Spirit will grant me the wisdom to make my life a beautiful mosaic which will be pleasing to You. Amen.



Fasting can be giving up sweets or a favorite video game for forty days. But it can be much more.

It is giving up what hinders my relationship with God. What keeps me from closeness with Him? What honors and pleases Him?

This lent we are to fast from self-indulgence and to walk with humility, gratitude, and generosity. Specifically, we are asked to care for others by sharing our food, sheltering homeless, and clothing those in need. Then our fasting will glorify the Lord.

Dear Lord, during this Lenten season may our fasting draw us ever closer to You. May it honor You, dear Lord. Amen.

Colleen Brannan



When reading Isaiah so many thoughts came to my mind about how this is relevant in so many ways to where our world is today. "If you honour it, instead of making your own way, pursuing your own interests, or acting on your own advice, then you will take delight in the Lord". This hit home and all I could continue to hear, was my Dad saying from the time I was little to my adult life, "Sunday is the Lords Day!". Now more than ever, I need to stop - we need to stop - and take those words and put them into action. All too often, we are working, searching for more and not taking time to sit, meditate and join in with family and friends to share the Word of the Lord. This verse can teach us that Lent is truly a time to reflect on where our lives are headed and to revisit where we would like to see it today and, in the year, to come.

Jesus, I pray for our community and for peace in the world. Please show us the way this Lenten season, on how to take the time that we so greatly need to find You Lord. Show us the Light that will quide us to more

peaceful ways! I want to be one with You on the Lord's Day and every day! I will listen Lord, I will follow Lord, and I will continue to Pray Lord, as I truly know You are there! Amen.

Monique Van Stechelman



February 21,2021 First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

Our readings from the first Sunday of Lent set the stage for our Lenten journey. The first reading stresses the covenant God establishes with "every living creature" and "every mortal being." His covenant with you and me. Jesus remains in the desert for 40 days and, tempted by Satan is supported by His Father's covenant. So much that Jesus proclaims, "This is the time of fulfillment... repent and believe in the gospel."

Saint Peter eloquently communicates our Lenten message by bringing together God's covenant with us, Jesus' 40 days in the desert, and His message to repent and believe in the gospel. Jesus rebuilds our covenant with God through his crucifixion and resurrection. We can each gain a clear conscience by strengthening our relationship with God and repenting. Are we willing to speak with Jesus, repent, and allow Him to help us clear our conscience? Are we willing to listen and act? Lent is a great time to reestablish our relationship with Jesus. Speak with Him, listen intently, and rebuild our covenant with God.

Gracious God, thank You for Your patience. Please continue to provide guidance and wisdom so my ears are open to Your words, my eyes are open to seeing Your presence in my daily life, and my mouth can tell

others about You. Show me how I can serve You and others today and every day. Amen.

David Yeghiaian



In 1 Peter 5:1-4, it says: "Tend the flock of God in your midst, [overseeing] not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."

We are promised rewards when Jesus returns if we tend our responsibilities eagerly and not for shameful profit. We need to be godly examples to others.

Then in Matthew 16:13-19, Jesus asks His disciples who people say He is. Simon Peter replies, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus says to him in return: "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but My Heavenly Father. And I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven."

In this passage in Matthew, we are promised that the netherworld will not prevail against the church. It is full of hope.

Dear God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, thank You for promising rewards in heaven for the works we do on earth. Thank You that You are with me all the time.

Thank You for filling me with hope. Amen.

Jennifer Garcia



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In this Gospel, Jesus teaches us not to babble in prayer but to pray with depth. He then gives us The Lord's Prayer; a prayer to study all upon itself, to understand its meaning and purpose. Throughout my life, different parts of the prayer have stood out to me, what has stood out most are the words "as we forgive those who have trespassed against us". Jesus makes clear that in order to be forgiven by your heavenly Father, you must forgive. At first, I read this like the warning it is, since forgiving is difficult, but as I grow in my relationship with Jesus, it implies so much more.

Praying that sentence through the lens of Isaiah's reading, this is the crux of The Lord's Prayer, the meaning and purpose to our lives. It's urging us to strive to become as loving, forgiving and merciful to others as God is with us...until it has achieved that which God has sent it. To not babble our words of forgiveness, but to be watered by the Word and to shower our forgiveness and mercy, as we pray for God to be with us, 'achieving the end for which He sent it'.

Dear Lord, Thank You for sending down Your Holy Spirit, to rain down Your graces. Help me learn to forgive, to find mercy for others and to seek Your will. There is so much I need to work



on, help me to grow through Your Word, and to avoid sin. For Yours is the love that fills the space in my heart. Amen.

Mary Reynebeau

Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 11:29-32

The Book of Jonah is only two pages long. The whole book is as long as the Sermon on the Mount. It contains some good lessons, however, and I'll point those out at the end

It was written several hundred years before Christ. It tells the tale of a man called by God to preach repentance to Nineveh, a pagan city and an enemy of Israel. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, the most powerful nation of Jonah's day. Assyria was known for its ruthless treatment of captives so it's not surprising that Jonah didn't want to tell them that God thought they were wicked and God was going to destroy them in 40 days.

Jonah's first reaction was to sail away about 2000 miles in the opposite direction. But God called Jonah a second time and this time he went to Nineveh and preached repentance.

There was another reason for Jonah not wanting to preach to the enemy besides their reputation for cruelty. And this is that the Jews would have criticized him for bringing God's love to people who would be seen as not deserving of it — the enemy. The story teaches us that God's love is universal.

The lessons that I think we should focus on are:

- (1) God uses human beings to bring His message.
- (2) God persists even if we turn away.
- (3) God loves even those people that we consider the enemy.

Heavenly Father, help us to love those whom we consider the enemy. Make us open to bringing Your love to others. Keep calling us, even when we turn away from You. Amen.

> Love your NEIGHBOR

Jean Payette

February 25, 2021 Thursday

Esther C: 12, 14-16, 23-25; Matthew 7:7-12

Queen Esther was seized with mortal anguish and fled to the Lord for refuge. She prayed to the Lord to help her as she was taking her life in her hands, asking that He make Himself known in this time of distress and to give her courage.

In the Gospel, Jesus talks about having our prayers answered. He says, ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you.

In these readings, the key message is to trust completely in the Lord and ask Him for what we need. I believe this is especially important during times of distress or when we have lost hope. I reflect on the strife observed in the world due to the COVID pandemic and political divisiveness. The negative impacts these things have had on human relationships is heartbreaking. I wonder how many people abandoned God during the pandemic instead of seeking Him.

During stressful times in our lives, do we turn away from the Lord instead of turning towards Him in prayer? If so, we miss out on receiving the sense of peace and hope that comes from prayer, at a time when it was needed most.

Lord, You are very generous and my ultimate sense of hope and truth in this world. Please help those who have turned away from You, that they may come to trust in You and ask for Your help. Please help me to fully trust in You, especially when I am feeling anguish or strife in my life. Amen.

Michelle Malone



"Repent, repent I say to you."

I am a sinner. We have all sinned. By the grace and love of God we are forgiven. I hold that in my heart, mind and soul each day. The world and our daily life itself can entangle us in "things". Items and situations that seem so important at the time, often leading us to sin. To turn away from our path to God. Be Aware.

Pray often to remain with the presents of God foremost in your mind. Strive to do God's will. His desire is to have us with Him eternally in heaven. We have free will to choose.

Who among us has not been angry with someone at some time or another? Has that anger built into more than what it started out to be because so much time had passed? Hopefully, you have resolved the issue with that someone. If not, this is the time to do so. If we see Jesus in each other, how can you stay angry? Forgive and reconcile. Then, praise and honor Jesus.

As I pray the "Our Father", I reflect on these words; ... Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us...

My Lord and my God, give me the strength and humility to forgive and love as you do. Allow this so nothing holds me back from you. With you I can do anything. Without you I am nothing. Amen

Cheryl Yursis



I'm sure you've heard these readings given to us from the pulpit numerous times, but did they ever really, really sink in? When I read them, I was reminded that when we made the decision to become a disciple of Christ, we chose the more challenging of the two roads that were presented to us. The easier being, do as we please without regard to anyone or anything or any repercussions. We probably didn't realize it at the time, but being a disciple of Christ is not an easy life! Love your enemy! I can't speak for you, but for me, that's asking an awful lot! But, being one of His disciples, we are to walk in His ways and observe His statutes. Also, as we are told, to love your neighbor & hate your enemy, even the tax collectors and pagans did that! I am not above or better than you, because I face this challenge daily, but I face it hand-in-hand with the Lord! You can too.

Heavenly Father, I pray that I will continue to try to keep Your Commandments. I stumble, and You help me up. I curse, and You caution me. I anger, and You calm me. Please continue to do so as I try to walk in Your ways and seek Your love. Amen

Butch Beyers



In the scripture readings today, the theme that resonated was: "knowing (and acting on) God's will". Genesis 22 tells how Abraham was not only willing to, but nearly did, sacrifice his only son. Abraham must have believed so resolutely that sacrificing his son, as hard as that would be, was no longer a choice. God's will drove his actions, and God rewarded Abraham for his trust. What if Abraham did not listen, and did not seek to follow God's will?

As documented in Mark 9, the intent of God's will can and will be revealed when accompanied with the necessary investments of seeking, listening, following, discerning, asking, and praying. Those are engaged words. Following God's will seems to be the most crucial element in our relationship with Jesus. That may be why, when we look at the Bible, there is no chapter devoted to "How to know God's will for your life." He wants us to seek, to ask, to observe, to worship, to study, to find guiet in the noise . . . all of which builds relationship. "If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you." (James 1:5, NRSV). He is telling us to ask so that we can find. He is telling us to begin discerning all choices by asking for wisdom. The very first choice you make creates the path to discover His will . . . sounds like a good place for us to start.

Knowing of God's will allows us to look beyond the circumstances to see (or simply trust in) God's hand working in our lives. Mathew 7:21 clearly states not all people will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but those acting on, and living out, God's will are positioned for Heaven. Is there anything more worthy of our time to discern and understand God's will for us? Jesus considered knowing and acting on God's will to be His highest priority (see John 5:30). . . that probably makes sense for us as well.

Lord, thank You for Your Glory and Your Grace, for Your honor, for love, hope and faith. Thank you Lord for all that you do for us, especially so for the things we do not see. Lord, I ask your mighty spirit to bless and strengthen all of us this Lenten season so that we may discern Your will for us. We pray that Your love guides our paths "with knowledge and depth of insight, so that we may be able to discern what is best." (Philippians 1:9-10). In your name we pray, Amen.

John Williams



Just like Daniel, we are often guick to judge and dismiss our own faults when looking at others. Especially when it comes to others who have hurt us. For Luke writes, "forgive and you will be forgiven". A common verse we hear, yet arguably one of the hardest to follow. Like us, God is faced with the act of forgiving every day. Imagine how much God's heart hurts when He sees us judge another one of His children or when we refuse to forgive. How can we expect our Father to be forgiving when we cannot do the same? Love your enemies; love those who have done you wrong; love. Jesus loves us so much that He has given Himself to us, completely. Now He is asking you to do the same by extending that love to others. There is a lot of darkness in our world, but Jesus is forever a shining light in that midst. A light of love, forgiveness, and joy. A light that shines through you if you allow His great mercy to flow. A light that comes with the power of forgiveness.



Loving Father, help us seek You first in everything we do. Help us be more loving, more forgiving, and more understanding to all those around us. May Your light shine through each of us today, and be shown to others who are in need of Your great love. Amen.

Brooke Huben

"Once elected I will work for the people, and not special interest groups." Ever hear that before? Once in office one can get caught up in the status quo and forget promises made. The Scribes and Pharisees in the gospel reading today are no different than today's leaders.

The truth is leaders are ordinary people, much like the rest of us. We all have strengths and weaknesses. We all face temptations, and at times give in to them. Changing our hearts and minds starts by giving time each day to God in prayer. God is always offering us the opportunity to repent and change.

Before I go to reconciliation I like to look over an examination of conscience. The Holy Spirit shows me even the areas of my life I may tend to overlook, or He may show me something bigger that affects other people and requires big changes in my life. Since this pandemic started I haven't been able to hold my grandson more than a few times, and I feel deprived. Forgiveness is a choice. It's an act of the will, not an act of the emotions. It's a decision to say, "I forgive you for hurting me and treating me unfairly". Imagine what could happen if every act of penance had the power to set us free and draw us closer to the Lord.

Jesus, I know if I just learn to come to You, You will take care of the rest. Thank You for understanding my suffering and continuing to shower me with Your grace and mercy. Amen.

Sally Ronsman



"Actions speak louder than words." "We have two ears but only one mouth." "I'd rather be thought a fool than open my mouth and prove it."

Words we've all heard. And the world and these words will continue long after we've heard them for the last time.

We might be remembered a bit for what we said, but our deeds (actions) will have lasting power. Remember how our parents may have given us "the look" with not a word spoken? See what I mean?

However, sometimes a few words are necessary. Jeremiah spoke words to God to defend those who wanted to attack him even though he could ultimately be thrown into a pit. Jesus has to tell His disciples that they must listen and serve if they desire glory. Then He "talks the talk" by "walking the walk" — He dies for them (and us).

What an action.

Jesus, I'm listening. Even though Your spoken words were few, they reflected a way of life filled with service to others. Always something for others. I'll listen, and I'll

especially remember what You DID for us. Fill my soul with a longing to do Your loving and serving actions. Amen.

Al Carlotto



Lent is a time of rejuvenation, restoration, reflection and reconciliation. We view this often as our spiritual spring cleaning. That can seem so overwhelming. We feel we are doing it alone. Two things resonated with me in today's readings.

God is speaking to us every day in every way. I tell my boys to lead with their heart, to use their head, and trust their gut. When you love and act out of love that is God planting you by the water, sending out roots to talk to you, and to nourish you. When you read God's Word and interpret it, that is God keeping your leaves green and helping you grow. When you enter silence, you will hear and see God.

Every moment of every day we make choices. Some of those choices are simple. Others are not so simple. How are you spending your choices in time, money, and media? Every time you choose God first, you grow closer to Him and less alone. Every time you do not choose God first, you grow further from Him and grow more alone. God never stops loving you or calling you home though.

Loving Lord, help us today to see You, to see the perfect moments, and to be vigilant. Help us to see the You that surrounds us and the You inside of us. Help us to remember we are witness to a miracle each day we awake. Help us to remember we are here for a reason and loved. Help us to listen to the Holy Spirits' gifts. Amen.

Keith Riesterer



The readings from Genesis and Matthew are difficult to read. You have the jealousy and anger of the brothers for Joseph and the hatred and greed in Matthew which leads to the killing of the son! As I was reflecting on these readings. I was saddened to think that we aren't too far from that today. How many families are divided due to their feelings on politics or COVID? Are you judgmental or jealous of a sibling or friend? There is division everywhere! Lent is such a beautiful time to regroup and recharge. You may not see eye to eye with your sibling, or co-worker, but have you sat down and had a conversation and truly listened to them? God created each of us different and we all have beautiful gifts to share. Try complimenting instead of criticizing. Try to see the good rather than the negative. So many people are hurting right now. If you think about a relationship that needs a little more TLC, pray about it and take time to reach out. Reconciliation is also the perfect way to get rid of those feelings of anger or resentment. Just as Joseph forgave his brothers, God forgives us.



Loving Lord, help us to let go of the anger, jealousy or resentment that we have on our hearts today. Give us a listening heart so that we may love You and love each other. Thank You for our family and friends and help us to reach

out, listen and raise each other up.

O Jesus, we surrender ourselves to You. Take care of everything. Amen.

Karen Buchinger

Micah writes, "What god can compare with You... not cherishing anger forever, but delighting in showing mercy?"

In the story of the prodigal son and the dutiful son, Luke writes how God does not celebrate each and every one of our daily good deeds – hopefully they are normal – and like the father says to his dutiful son, "you are with me always and all I have is yours."

He does however celebrate the repentance of a sinner, as in the son who is surprised to be treated with mercy on returning home in personal humiliation. "We should celebrate because your brother here was dead and has come to life."

We all sin. Most of us are that prodigal son at some point in our lives, when we choose to walk away from the Father and follow serious temptation. God can forgive even the worst sins. When we beg for His forgiveness for any and all of our sins, the sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are His Grace to open the floodgates of divine mercy and welcome us home.

Dear Jesus, I am sorry for all of my sins. Thank You for saving me on the cross. Father, I beg You for Your mercy

and forgiveness. With Your grace, help me to do Your will - today and every day - for Your greater honor and glory. AMEN!!





March 7, 2021 Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8; John 4: 5-42

The overwhelming thoughts that came to my mind while reading Exodus 17: 3-7 was "I'm thirsty!" I'm reading about the Israelites cry to Moses that they thirst. They fear that they, their children and grandchildren will die without water to drink. How often does it happen to us that we feel a sense of panic if we're thirsty and have no way to drink anything for quite some time?

Being without the Word of God can have the same effect. Although we may not feel panic, it has the same effect on us spiritually. In Romans 5: 1-2, 5-8 it is made known that we will have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The only way to peace, and not thirst is to have a deep relationship with Jesus Christ. You can feel it, you can sense it, when you need to replenish yourself, seek the Word of God. Since January 1st, I have started my day with Formed Daily reflections, the readings of the day, and reading the Bible in a Year. I obviously have been extremely thirsty; this is how I'm quenching my thirst.

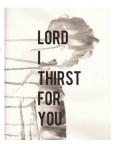
Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for always being there to quench my thirst. I don't always ask You for a drink, but You always wait for me like a loving parent, ready to hand me Your cup.

I will do my part to share Your overflowing cup of love with others. Amen.



Diana Ball



Interwoven throughout today's readings is the problem affecting our society, and the world at large today. This problem is not listening deeply. As we ponder this unwillingness to deeply listen as illustrated in each of these readings, let us call to mind the New Year's resolution Bishop David Ricken implores each of us to make.

Bishop Ricken states:

"We need to develop skills in deep listening."

He goes on further:

"Friends, if there is one key to making 2021 a better year for all of us, it will be following the example of Jesus and committing ourselves to the work of deep listening. Let this be the vaccination against the virus of division that is plaguing our society. As Christians, we have an opportunity to lead the way in this effort and truly make Christ's love present in the world. Let us be the example that the world can follow of deep listening and respectful dialogue. May each of us receive the grace to listen deeply to our brothers and sisters so as to bring healing and restore unity in our world".

Dear God, our Heavenly Father, help me to develop skills in deep listening and use these skills ongoing. Help me to fully hear and accept Your will for me. Help me to be more merciful, loving, and understanding towards others through deep listening and respectful dialogue. Amen.



Bill Monfre

How are we impacted by the many people God puts in our path to aid our spiritual journey? Do we see and hear the graces He provides? Letting lessons penetrate our hearts? Or do we see only the surface and go about business as usual after the encounter?

In the first reading, King Nebuchadnezzar was so angry at Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for not worshiping the golden statue he built, he ordered them burned in the furnace. They plead with God to save them and He does, protecting them from the fire. King Nebuchadnezzar was so moved by a God that can perform such miracles he promoted the three men and ordered the kingdom to worship their God.

In the gospel reading, the master was moved with compassion and forgave his servant. The servant, instead of recognizing this grace and growing from it, returned to his selfish ways and paid the price. Jesus tells us we need to learn from these encounters, remember the virtues, and forgive from our heart. We like to think the way to heaven is wide, but we are told it is like passing through the eye of a needle. We do not need to move mountains; God takes care of that. We just need to see, hear, and learn from what He provides.

Loving God, please help us to follow the path You have laid out for us. To love from our heart and forgive as You forgive us; not seven times but seventy-seven times to infinity. Amen



Karen Monfre

God has given us His laws to follow because of the tremendous love He has for us. Throughout the history of the Bible, He has shown us time and time again what happens when we fail to follow His laws and when we lead others down the wrong path. God has given us the responsibility to know, follow and teach His laws. We are not to twist, soften, or adapt His commands to make our lives easier or the lives of our family and friends easier as well. We are to love ourselves and those around us and the best way to do this is to teach and proclaim the commands that God has given us. As Matthew said, "whoever practices and teaches these commands will be great in the kingdom of heaven." This should be our goal!

Loving God,

Thank You for Your unfailing love. The commandments that You have given are an example of Your tremendous love and are intended to bring me closer to You. Help me to practice, share and teach others with love the laws You have commanded so that I, my family and friends, can be great in your Kingdom. Amen.

Bill & Sarah Wulf



Jeremiah 7:23-28: Luke 11:14-23

Is Jesus the Master of your life?

Jesus makes it clear that we are either for Him and the kingdom of God or against Him. We can choose the kingdom of God or the kingdom of darkness (the rule of Satan). God shows us His presence everyday and we need to open the door to hear and obey Him. God knows that we struggle daily, but if we want to live in freedom from Satan, then we must obey God's word. Peace and security come to those who trust in God and obey His word.

Lord Jesus, help me to trust You and be open to Your word. Give me strength to choose good, not evil; God's will, not my will and God's way, not my way. Help me grow in Your love everyday and be mindful of Your presence, now and forever. Amen

Marie Letto



The message in Hosea was for the Israelites who turned away from God because of their iniquities, their immoral ways. God said, "I will heal their apostasy," their abandonment of religion. "I will love them freely." All of us turn away from God at times. We chase happiness and peace with material things (idols) and we lack humility that wisdom brings us. Material possessions aren't bad, we just need to remember to share them with others. God gives us everything that we need to find fulfillment and happiness: His unconditional love despite our faults.

Mark's Gospel builds on the same message found in Hosea. Jesus instructs us to live the greatest commandments. First, "The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, will all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Lent is a perfect time to simplify our lives in order to grow in wisdom and humility. Jesus asks us to focus on the ultimate prize...God. It's easy to talk the talk, but do we really walk the walk?

Good and gracious God, we know that You should be at the center of our lives. However, there are times when we get caught up in earthly possessions. Please guide our daily thoughts and actions to serve You by how we treat others. Amen.

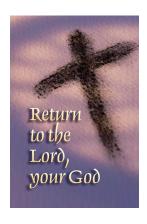


Paul & Sarah Patterson

The first line from Hosea tells me that this is what Lent is all about: "Come, let us return to the Lord." Lent is a time of personal reflection and growth, but I'm reminded that it is also communal. We are in this together, "Let us return to the Lord". Together we practice the disciplines of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Knowing that I am not in this alone gives me encouragement and hope in my daily struggle. It also gives me a sense of obligation to myself and to all who make a commitment to journey with Jesus these 40 days. May we do so with trust and humility.

Jesus, look inside my heart and see what motivates me. Help me to use this Lenten season to meld my heart to Yours. I want to love as You love, but I fall so short. I need You. How I need You! Come Lord Jesus, change my heart. Amen.

Judy Goolsbey



March 14, 2021 Fourth Sunday of Lent

2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23; Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3:14-21

The reading from Second Chronicles reminds us of the destruction that occurs as a result of infidelity. But not just physical infidelity, as in cheating on a spouse – but in spiritual infidelity, when we lose faithfulness. Chronicles calls us to keep our hearts free from every pollution and truly consecrated to the Lord.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians outlines the nature of grace...the source of our salvation. This grace is a gift from God...and it is by grace that we are saved through faith. What incredible mercy God delivers for those who turn to His Son.

Today's Gospel contains a passage that has become somewhat of a cliché...as John 3:16 is posted on many signs at sporting events and other public gatherings –"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 John, salvation is not in another world, but a result of faith lived today.

God, let me live in my faith today, so I may find salvation. Help me welcome Your mercy as the gift it truly is. And thank You for the gift of Your Son, that we may believe and find eternal life. Amen.

Brant & Jill Bergeron



2020.... what a year! In many ways 2020 was difficult, stressful, sad, the list goes on! But if we really look back, and if when we look back, we look to see where God was in all of it, I think we can say He was absolutely in the middle of it all. In Isaiah, we read, "no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress." If we keep our eyes on God, the stress and worries of this world don't seem as bad.

In John, Jesus meets a father whose son is ill and close to death. The father begs Jesus to heal him. And Jesus says "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." "Go, your son will live." So the man believed and his son was healed. Because of his strong belief in Jesus, his family came to also believe. What does it take for us to believe? There are so many miracles around us. Do we see them? 2020 was not a good year in a lot of ways. Lent is a way to open our eyes to the many miracles that surround us. May this lent be a 'reset' for us and bring us hope and awareness that God is truly in our midst.

Dear Lord,

I know You are with me. Please help me to open my eyes and see that You are here. May my belief and faith

in You be so strong that my family also believes and their eyes become open. Open our hearts to Your miracles. Thank You for all You have given me! Amen.





Jesus is being persecuted for having healed on the Sabbath. Jesus said "My father is always working and I to must work." I feel that this means Jesus is always there for us. He heals not only the body but also the mind and spirit. Sometimes we are not granted what we ask, but are given what we need. At this time Jesus knew what was the beginning of God's plan for him.

Dear Lord I feel that we ask so much of You without thanking You for all You have given us, I thank You for past graces I have received. I pray that You can bring healing to our country. Amen.

Kathy O'Neil



Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-30

Happy St. Patrick's Day! On this date 24 years ago. I became a father for the first and second times ves, within 2 minutes' time, I was the father of twin daughters! I'll never forget the doctor's exclamation to us, "welcome to parenthood!" Today's readings are equally impassioned and powerful regarding parenthood. God is our Father and He promises to provide for us now and forever. Yet, like the Israelites, there are times when I wonder about the Lord's plan for us. The prophet Isaiah's words are clear -our Father "will never forget" us. In today's Gospel reading, Jesus reminds us that none of us can do it on our own. Our true mission is to get to Heaven and that message is loud and clear in this passage. Jesus teaches us to truly center our lives around God and remember it is Thy will and not MY will. During a "Life in the Spirit" program, I received one of those Hot Wheels cars I loved as a young boy. The suggestion was to "allow God to drive my car," and I keep it on my desk as a reminder of the wisdom of that advice.

Heavenly Creator, during these turbulent times, help us to place our full trust in You. Allow us to center our

mission squarely on doing Your good works and making a positive impact on the world. And may the Lord be front and center in our Faith community – AMEN!





A disabled man waits by the healing waters of Bethesda for years until one day, a Sabbath, Jesus appears and heals him. Certainly, Jesus could have waited one more day and limited all the trouble which was to follow. But no. He healed on the Sabbath and that was all it took. The Jewish authorities had Him. Clearly, this itinerate preacher knew the rules. He had already proven His knowledge of Scripture in the synagogue (Matthew 13:53-54). So why now, would He forsake the Mosaic Law; the laws of the Jewish community? Could it be that Jesus was challenging the Jewish authorities to dig more deeply into scripture, to search for and find the love of God? Scripture should always lead us to Jesus, the embodiment of God's love. Jesus had gone beyond just following laws; He had loved. That is what He asked of the Jewish people on that Sabbath so long ago, and that is what He asks of us today.

Dear Lord, When I feel fearful today, let me love. When I feel anger today, let me love. Through all of my emotions today, let me love. You are the source of all love. Lord, let me rest in Your embrace and love as You have. Amen.

Diane Strobel



March 19, 2021 Friday Solemnity of St. Joseph

2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a

"I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me." 2 Samuel: 14

When I was growing up, I spent my weekdays after school watching reruns of shows like "Father Knows Best" and "Leave it to Beaver." These were shows with strong father figures. Over the years, the father figures of TV shows have shifted dramatically. Now, sadly, the father in TV shows is often depicted as a buffoon. Upright, intelligent father role models are seemingly hard to find! Enter St. Joseph. What can we learn about being a good father from him? For starters, morality. Scripture tells us he was "righteous", meaning he made moral decisions that aligned with God's laws. He was also compassionate. Despite the sadness and embarrassment, he surely felt at the news of Mary's pregnancy he was "unwilling to expose her to shame." (Matt 1:19) Surprisingly, we can learn evangelization! While St. Joseph is never directly quoted in Scripture, he must have told and shared his story with others, or we couldn't know that God came to him in a dream (Matt 1:20). Finally-perhaps most importantly-he made an intentional decision to be a father to Jesus. He just decided. And then he lived out his decision. Perhaps that's the most important step for all of us: to be more intentional in parenting our children and those we consider "children" in our lives. To decide today to align our moral compass with God's and point those around us to Him by sharing personal stories of how He's been at work in our lives. Of course, like St. Joseph, we must wrap our stories and teachings in compassion and love.

Good St. Joseph, pray for us! Lisa Christiansen In the time period we see today, many people were so overwhelmed by the tiny details predicted by scripture that they failed to see God's big plan. The people could not accept Jesus the Christ, the foretold Messiah, for the simple reason that He did not originate from Bethlehem as was previously predicted. They were quick to judge Jesus even though He was, in fact, born in Bethlehem where His father's family was from.

So often we get caught up in the small details of life that we fail to see God's bigger plan for us. The small things such as what someone thinks of me or how I look this morning are such trivial matters when we were made for something bigger than we could ever have imagined. We need to stay focused on Jesus, who is truth.

Lord, help me not to be deceived. Open my eyes so I may see the truth. Open my ears so I may hear Your words of truth. Open my mouth so I may only speak truth. Open my heart so I may feel Your true presence. Let the worries of this time pass away and all my trust be in You. Amen.

Kay Vandersteen



March 21, 2021 Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33

Do you ever feel like God has abandoned you? In Jeremiah, God formed a new Covenant with us. He put His law on our hearts. If you ever feel He is far away, it is at that moment when He needs you to stay strong and seek Him. He may be silent but He never leaves you, so don't leave Him. Jesus learned obedience to the Father through His suffering as it says in Hebrews and He brought salvation to all who obey Him. He did not refuse the Father, run away or disobey. He changed the world and asks us to follow Him regardless of the trials in our lives. Lent is a time to challenge ourselves; to dig deep and encounter Christ in the desert. It is a time to strengthen our resolve and will power. As it says in John 12:20-33, "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". We are called to serve Him here and lose our life in this world in order to find it in the next.

Dear Lord, Thank You for Your witness to us. Our salvation is because of You and we are grateful. We ask our Mother, Blessed Mary, to pray for us to have the desire in our hearts to seek You in all that we do. Amen.



Kellie Ahonen

In both scriptures there is hope for God's mercy and forgiveness to be saved. Lent is an opportunity to focus on the poor choices we make or the less than ideal situations we place ourselves. Truthfulness, contrition and renewed commitment as a child of God and disciple of Christ are necessary.

Remembering we are made in the image and likeness of God, we trust in His intention for us to share in His glory forever. Through His suffering, death, and resurrection Jesus heals humanity, saving us from sin and death. We know the grace of God, life in the Spirit, and our role in the Body of Christ, His Church. God loves us. Jesus saves us. The Spirit strengthens us. May we too hear the words of Jesus, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and from now on do not sin anymore."

Gracious God, forgiving Father, may we remember Your will, Your love in our daily life. Jesus our Savior, Jesus our brother, may we live and love as Your disciples. Spirit, the fulfilling love between God and Jesus, strengthen our commitment to be one in faith, living God's Word daily. Amen.

Wayne and Nancy Nelson



The reading from Numbers is about the Israelites being brought up from Egypt, where there is no food or water and they are angry and complained against God and Moses. So the Lord sent serpents that bit and killed many people. They finally broke down and asked Moses to pray to our Lord. Our Lord told Moses to make a bronze serpent, which the people could look at when they were bit and recover.

Doesn't this past year make us wonder why this awful pandemic came about and the many people who have died from it? At one time or another we became frustrated, angry, helpless, sad, fearful and hopeless, just as the Israelites did. It changed all of our lives, but we prayed so much more, became closer to family and friends and for us, we became closer to God. Is there a message that we should always put our total faith in God, surrender to Him, knowing He will get us through this?

We surely have learned to thank God for the many blessings we have received and especially don't take for granted all the little things that happen on a daily basis.

Jesus, as we travel through this Lenten season, help us to grow in faith and commit ourselves to being a better person. By sharing our gifts with others, we strengthen

ourselves. Let us try to curb our complaining and be more joyful in our everyday interactions. We pray that 2021 will be a better year and we ask this all in Your name. Amen.

Diane and Chuck Tappa



In the Gospel today, Jesus says, "...everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin." I have felt this enslavement. When I sin against a friend, by my words or actions, and pride keeps me from apologizing, my thoughts are continually clouded with how I wronged that person. Looking at our first reading, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, faithful men of God, risk their lives by not falling down and worshipping the golden statue. Imagine how their guilt from worshipping an idol would have weighed on their souls.

We are all sinners. How do we not become slaves to sin? As Jesus shares, the Son can free you. Visiting with Jesus at Adoration and receiving the healing power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation can do wonders.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for Your tremendous love and mercy. When the pain and sorrow of sin is weighing me down, may I remember to call on Your name and Your power to heal. Amen

Susan Casleton



March 25, 2021 Thursday Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Isaiah 7:10-14, 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38

Today's feast is an appropriate occasion to reflect on our vocation. All of us, like Mary, have a vocation in life. Nothing is by chance. God has created each one of us for a purpose, to manifest His glory and share His love so that at the end of our journey, we can share the fullness of life with Him. And like Mary, we must make time to discern our vocation in life, what God is calling us to do. While each of us has a primary vocation according to our state of life, we also have secondary vocations, or vocation within a vocation. The way the Lord wants us to serve Him might change according to circumstances in life. Therefore, we need always to be sensitive, like Mary, to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in how we should respond to God's call. When she asked the angel, "But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?", it was not like Zechariah who asked in doubt. For Mary, she wanted to know how the Lord would make use of her for the work of redemption.

So it is important right from the outset to remind ourselves constantly that we need to ask what the Lord is asking of us.

To say "Yes" to God is the best decision. Mary would know better. We ask her to pray for us that we too will have the courage and discipline to say "Yes" to God and

that we rejoice with her that God's will be done in our lives. Amen!!!

Dcn Manny Torres



A good friend, on a topic of which he knew little, erroneously cast a wide swath of people in a negative light on the internet. When I tried to explain how he had erred, he ghosted me. I have tried reaching out to him, but I fear I have lost a good friend. What is it about humans, that we believe we are better than others and will not accept evidence otherwise? Why do we try to silence those with whom we disagree? Why do so many not believe in God, which is an acknowledgement of someone better than themselves? Why do so many believe in abortion? Why do so many continue to willingly follow self-serving ways? Why do we not accept the truth? Jeremiah criticized the people of Judah for their materialism, their selfishness, for breaking their Covenant with God. In return, they attempted to kill and silence him. The Jews meant to stone Jesus for telling them the truth about Himself as the Son of God, despite the many good works they acknowledged. How could a mere carpenter's son be such? How, indeed.

Lord, please help me to accept and follow Your teachings. Please help me appreciate and respect all of Your people. Please help me accept Your wisdom. More than anything, I pray that Thy will be done. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

Dave Withee



Unification is an exciting concept. Who doesn't like the idea of everyone "being on the same page?"

Ezekiel prophesizes that the Lord promised that the Israelites would become "one nation upon the land" and that there would be "one Shepherd for them all."

John recounts the story of how the chief priests and Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin concluding "If we leave Him alone, all will believe in Him." Caiaphas prophesized that Jesus was going to die for the nation and gather into one the dispersed children of God.

So given that Jesus did die for all of us, have we truly been united? Or has our love of things over people, our sinfulness and our hatreds prevented that?

Lent is a time for us to look at how our actions complete the work that Jesus started. We must begin with evaluating how our behavior and thoughts reflect the idea that we can truly live as one people, complete in our love of God and one another.

Lord, help me to remove from my mind conversations that may be judgmental or uncharitable. Help me to move instead towards love. When the day is over, let me lay it at Your feet, with its successes which are all

Yours and its failures, which are all mine. Help me move towards unity with You and with my fellow man. Amen.

Kathy Schmocker



The people of Jerusalem cheered Jesus when He entered the city on a colt, not as a great warrior, but as a humble servant of God. Jesus probably knew that within the week they would all abandon Him. Yet He rode into town anyway. He rode into town not as a conqueror of the world but as a savior of the soul. He knew that the political and economic powerful saw Him as a threat to their grip on wealth and social status. Yet Jesus rode into town anyway. He rode in because he loved God, he loved God's people, and His mission was to reunite the two, even if it led to his own death. On this Palm Sunday, it might be helpful to imagine ourselves in this story. Are we following Jesus' teachings of service, compassion, stewardship, and love or are we just cheering Him on, only to abandon Him when our comfort is at stake?

Dear Creator of all that is Good,

Help us to recognize that our mission is to follow Jesus' example of love even when it is difficult or may put us at risk. Help us to be steadfast in our mission and know that we are truly following Jesus. Amen.

Sherry and Gary Van Helvoirt



Here we are at the start of Holy Week, the last leg of the Lenten journey that leads to the pinnacle events of our faith: the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Centuries before Jesus, Isaiah's Chosen One is eerily consistent with Jesus' ministry and sacrifice. Jesus knew He must fulfill the role of the Chosen One, the ultimate Sacrificial Lamb. On the final trip to Jerusalem, the Gospel reading describes the scene and those accompanying Jesus while the climactic events were brewing in Jerusalem.

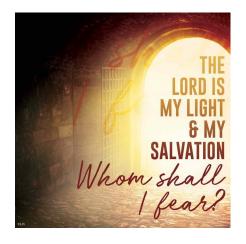
What should we be pondering this week? Here are a few thoughts:

Everything in the Bible points to the ultimate event of Easter Sunday. Reflections later this week will present the profound significance of Easter. In the meantime, we can intensely prepare (form) our minds and hearts. If you have ever read The Lord of the Rings Trilogy, you'll experience thousands of pages of Frodo and Sam wandering (and wandering, and wandering, when are they ever going to get there?) until the ultimate scene of throwing the ring into the fires of Mordor (the sacrifice that saves the world). It is one of the most satisfying dramatic scenes ever written, more so because during their over-extensive wanderings, they and the reader were formed for that moment. This is a weak illustration of our Bible, Lenten journey, and the drama and joy of the Resurrection. Ponder intensely this week on Jesus' final journey, the characters, the events, and how much we have in common with every one of them. They are us.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.
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.

Psalm 27: 1, 13-14

Andrea Fassbender



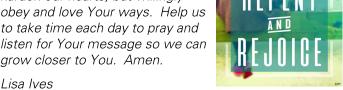
Today's passage from Isaiah is the second of four "Servant of the Lord" oracles. These poems have been applied to Christ, and Isaiah predicted that this servant from the Lord would deliver the world from sin. We too are called to be servants. This means we are to turn away from sin and serve according to God's will. All that we do and say should honor and glorify Christ.

Today's gospel reading begins with Jesus announcing that one of the twelve will betray him. He knows that Judas will do this. The reading ends with Jesus also predicting Peter's denial. What then is the difference between Judas and Peter? The bible states that Satan entered Judas, and when he left the upper room, he went out into the dark. He resisted God's love and followed evil. Peter denied Jesus three times, but he repented. Peter was restored and recommitted his life to the Lord.

We too are sinful people, yet God continues to shower us with His love and grace. He knows we are not a perfect people, but if we repent and make a conscious change to do His will, He will forgive us.

Dear Jesus, help your servants to follow You faithfully.

We pray for insight as to what Your plan is for each of us. Let us not harden our hearts, but willingly obey and love Your ways. Help us to take time each day to pray and listen for Your message so we can grow closer to You. Amen.



March 31, 2021 Wednesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Matthew 26:14-25

In the first reading, Isaiah talks about setting his face like flint when his adversaries beat him and pluck his beard. He knows that God is on his side and his opponents "will all wear out like cloth, the moth will eat them up".

In the second reading, Jesus sits at the Passover meal with His disciples and announces that one of them will betray Him.

It is a fact that in life, there will be suffering. It is inescapable. But without failure, we could never know the exhilaration of success. Without Judas, Jesus would have never suffered His Passion. Without Jesus dying on the cross, we could never know salvation.

Lord, let us realize that there is a purpose for our pain.

Help us to know that there is a reason for the unreasonable, a solution to our suffering.

Let us see a light through the darkness. Amen.

Tom Komp



Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15

"Before the feast of Passover, Jesus realized that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to his Father. He had loved his own in this world and would show his love for them to the end." John 13:1

Please place yourself in the midst of this gospel passage for Holy Thursday. Feel the joy of people's lives changed by the Gospel. Feel the sadness and fear as the disciples experience discouragement and, even, persecution.

Dear Jesus.

On this Holy Thursday, let me be part of all those who celebrate the Last Supper.

When I am at Mass it is very easy to be pleased by the music, the company of good friends, the reading of the bible, and the encouragement of those we know.

However, when I face pain, struggle, injustice or persecution it is much more difficult.

Help me to remember that You are with me in the fullness of Your love and to the end. Amen!

Fr. John Bergstadt



April 2, 2021 Good Friday The Lord's Passion

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42

Today is Good Friday. My first response is usually – why do we call this GOOD Friday when we know all the bad things that happened to Jesus today? As I read John's account of the Passion of Jesus, I put on my glasses that search for the good and filter out the bad, and this is what I saw.

- ◆ Jesus said, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus the Nazorean." He said to them, "I AM."
- ◆ Jesus' response, "I AM," is code language for the name of God. So what is the good here? It is good to look for God.
- ◆ Jesus said to Pilate, "Everyone who belongs to the Truth listens to My voice." Pilate said to Him "What is Truth?"
- ◆ What is so good about this? We believe that the Truth is a Divine person, Jesus, and it is good to belong to Him.
- ◆ Lastly, when He had taken the wine, He said, "It is finished." And bowing His head, He handed over the spirit.

Why is this the ultimate good news? It is finished. His saving sacrifice is completed. The gift of our salvation is near. Our new life will soon begin by His rising on Easter Sunday and His gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. When we are baptized, we die with Jesus and rise with Him to new life, and all the goodness of God is given to us. These are just a few ideas on why we call this GOOD Friday.

Heavenly Father, by Your grace we look for Jesus in our sufferings and find strength in the victory of the cross. Help us to belong to Him, receive the consolation of His loving



truth, and finish our life work with Him. Amen

Fr. Jim Lucas

April 3, 2021 Holy Saturday Easter Vigil

Genesis 1:1-2:2; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Isaiah 55:1-11; Epistle- Romans 6:3-11; Mark 16:1-7

When reflecting on these passages I found a common theme of "New Life in God". In Genesis, God makes all things new by creating man in the image of the Trinity; a relationship of love.

The reading from the Book of Exodus relates the Israelites escaping Egypt. This liberation from death to NEW LIFE comes through water which according to the Catechism is..." the liberation wrought by Baptism" (1221).

Isaiah's reading addressed the returning exiles from Babylon. God invited them and all who are spiritually hungry and thirsty to partake freely, to experience a NEW LIFE through His Everlasting Covenant with them in Jesus Christ

In Romans, St. Paul states that because of Christ's obedience and triumph on the Cross, the opportunity for NEW LIFE has been given to us through Grace which leads to eternal life.

Lastly, in the Gospel of Mark we hear of the Resurrection. The focus is on the empty tomb and our mission to proclaim this wonderful news of NEW LIFE to all. We have been saved through the waters of Baptism and the New Covenant of Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Christ is risen, ALLELUIA!

Creator God hear our petitions,

That we never fail to live up to our dignity of being made in Your image

That the gift of Baptism and our hunger for Christ, may inspire us to always "Seek the Lord"

For the strength to die to ourselves to attain the everlasting life promised thru Jesus

For the courage to proclaim the news of salvation offered through the Paschal Mystery

We pray. Amen.

Monica Janssen



Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-9

When reading this selection from John's Gospel, it's hard not to imagine yourself there. While it was still dark Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw the stone was rolled away. Would you have gone in or would you have run to get Peter and the other disciples? I certainly would have been afraid and suspect that in the darkness, I would have run as well

But what drew her to the tomb? What called to her that night while it was still dark out, that she went to the tomb where Jesus lay?

Often God calls to us not in bright shining wonderful moments, but in the darkest of nights, when we feel most alone. Sometimes we are afraid to answer, to go "into the tomb." May we find the strength and courage to do so, as Jesus is there always with us, even in what seems to be the "empty tomb" of our world.

Lord Jesus, please help us to hear Your voice, even in the darkest of moments. Help us to go bravely with You, to help bring light to our world. May Your victory over death continue to give us hope to carry on, especially when we are most afraid. Amen.

Brad & Kim Shefchik

