

A wooden boardwalk with railings on both sides leads towards a large, glowing white cross in the distance. The background is a warm, golden sunset sky with soft clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

LENT 2025

A JOURNEY OF
HOPE

DAILY LENTEN REFLECTIONS

ST. MICHAEL PARISH, ORLAND PARK, ILLINOIS

The Jubilee Prayer

Pilgrims of Hope

Father in heaven,
May the *faith* you have given us in your son,
Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled in our hearts
by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope* for the coming
of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless
cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both
humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure
expectation of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us,
Pilgrims of Hope,
yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread the joy and peace
of our Redeemer throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.



Pope Francis has declared 2025 as a Jubilee Year, also known as a Holy Year. The theme of the 2025 Jubilee is “Pilgrims of Hope.” Pope Francis wrote, “In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring..”

Pope Francis also wrote, “Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic, and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope.”

We are beginning our Lenten journey. On Ash Wednesday we begin the Holy Season of Lent. We are marked, or signed, with ashes to remind us of who we are, sinners, and like the barren branches outside we anticipate the coming Spring—the coming of new life. During Lent we purify ourselves through the traditional disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Lent helps us find reasons for hope and our theme for Lent is, “*The Journey of Hope.*” As disciples we are to be the face of Christ to others. Lent gives us a perfect opportunity to, by our actions and almsgiving, spread God’s love and compassion. This allows us to bring hope to others. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation we are given hope that we can leave our sinful past behind.

I invite you to take a few moments each day, read the scripture readings and reflections prepared for you by your fellow parishioners at St. Michael. Open your mind and heart to the gentle whisper of God’s voice. God is speaking—let us take the time to listen.

I pray that you will make the most of these forty days. May this be a time of conversion and change, and may you be ready to celebrate with other believers, the Glory of the Risen Christ. May we rise from the ashes of sin and come alive with the fire of faith given to us at Pentecost! Let us strive to live in joyful hope, for Christ is our Savior.

In Christ’s love,
Fr. Frank A. Kurucz
Pastor

March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2: 12-18 2 Corinthians 5: 20—6:2 Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-18
Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

I met a man who was brought up Catholic but left the church a long time ago. His teenaged daughter has inspired him. Her growing faith inspires his dormant faith, and he is filled with the Holy Spirit.

I met a young mom who grew up disliking everything Catholic. She became restless and researched on her own. She learned that the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is something powerful that other faiths do not accept.

I met an older mom who converted to Catholicism when she married, but when her husband showed no interest she left the church. Her adult son, not brought up Catholic, has urged her to return and together they learn and relearn what Catholics believe and why.

I never left physically, but spiritually I have struggled to maintain a real faith, a sincere faith, a conscious faith instead of a habit. As I read the reflections in our booklet I see that I am not alone. I've taken what I was given for granted. Another mass, yawn. Another smudge of ashes on my forehead, yawn. How did I lose the meaning behind what I'm doing? God didn't give up on me—I gave up on God! Today Joel says, "*Come back to the Lord your God. He is kind and full of mercy.*" As I reflect at the beginning of this Lent, this Journey of Hope, I reach out to God whose arms are stretched out to me. "*Come back to me*" the Lord asks.

**T. Shepard
Parishioner**

March 6, 2025

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 Luke 9: 22-25

Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

We can all remember a season in our lives where the next day ahead was completely unpredictable and we hesitated to take any steps forward. As humans who rely heavily on routine, this can often feel like we are in the twilight zone, and we are trying to grab onto anything that is familiar. If there is anything I have learned from tuning into plenty of radio stations over the past few months, it is that we have fear because of this: we cannot understand that we will be alright in unfamiliar situations because we have never been in that scenario before.

When I read Luke 9: 22-25 I am reminded that we are taken care of by two perfect beings: God the Father and Jesus the Son. We would be beyond blessed to have just one of them, but we have both. Why is it better to have both? Because one of them knows the plans he has for us and while the other also knows this, too, how comforting it is to know that Jesus was fully human once! Jesus went through just as many human experiences as we have. So, when we are fearful of the unknown ahead of us, we should sleep peacefully knowing Jesus has been through this, too. Yet God the Father has a wonderful story for us.



Julia Butkus
Catechist

March 7, 2025

Friday after Ash Wednesday

Isaiah 58: 1-9a

Matthew 9: 14-15

A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.

During the Lenten season we are invited to embrace the practice of fasting, and relinquish something that brings us pleasure. Yet, with each passing year I occasionally find myself losing sight of the deeper significance underlying these acts. At times I worry that we may observe this tradition merely out of a sense of religious duty, rather than a genuine reflection on its true purpose. We must redirect our focus toward performing acts of goodness for the glory of God rather than observing practices such as fasting or abstaining from certain habits out of a sense of religious duty. We are called to pause and contemplate the true purpose behind these sacrifices.

I find myself engaging in a self-examination. What tangible steps am I taking to assist those in need within my community? How can I more effectively embody and demonstrate God's love and compassion? How can I become a more devoted disciple of Jesus? As we progress through our individual Lenten journeys, pause and reflect upon your own actions during this sacred time. Are you performing acts of kindness merely for the recognition and admiration of others? Or are you striving to do good for the greater glory and honor of God? Let us commit ourselves to ensuring that our Lenten promises remain not only fulfilling, but deeply meaningful, both throughout the remainder of this season and beyond.

Amanda Tracy

St. Michael School Second Grade Teacher

March 8, 2025

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

Isaiah 58: 9b-14

Luke 5: 27-32

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth.

After reading both the first reading and the gospel, I reflected on their impact in my life. The first reading resonated with me because it emphasizes that true worship goes beyond simply attending church. God desires action—helping those who are less fortunate and in need. Faith is not just about words or rituals, it is about living with compassion and justice. When I look at my life I realize that I feel closest to God when I am serving others. It does not have to be anything elaborate—small, everyday acts of kindness can be just as meaningful. In those moments my relationship with God seems strongest.

The gospel spoke deeply to me about God's forgiveness and the importance of not letting prejudices shape how we treat others. Forgiving can be difficult, especially when we have been hurt, but Jesus shows us that forgiveness is a powerful gift. We are human and imperfect, but through his example we learn that choosing to forgive brings healing, not just for others but for ourselves.

These readings remind me that faith is about love in action—through service, kindness, and a heart open to forgiveness.



Ben Knutsen
Quest Teen Member

March 9, 2025

First Sunday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26: 4-10 Romans 10: 8-13 Luke 4: 1-13

Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

These readings made me think about the things in my life that may be tempting me to turn away from God. Reading about Satan tempting Jesus in the desert and Jesus' unrelenting loyalty to God reminds me of the pressures of social media which seem to be infiltrating every part of my life. I feel the pull to constantly be comparing myself to others, especially as a mother of young children. It is hard to avoid the advertisements and posts bombarding me from multiple platforms, sometimes even posted by friends and family members. It's hard not to feel envious, bitter, or even to second guess the decisions I've made for myself and my family when I am constantly tempted to compare myself to others. Is my house big enough? Is it clean enough? Are my kids in enough activities? Are they reaching the milestones they are supposed to be reaching? Am I following the right wellness routine? Am I filling my activity circles fast enough?

At the end of the day I know that if I stay as loyal to God as Jesus did and resist the temptation to constantly compare myself to others, with God's grace I will always be enough. I will provide the right things and opportunities for my family and I will have everything I need.

Sara Calandriello
Parishioner



March 10, 2025

Monday of the First Week of Lent

Leviticus 19: 1-2, 11-18 Matthew 25: 31-46

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.



When the Son of God comes in all glory and all the heavenly court, many will then notice who is our God.

The best way to describe God is by love. God, who decided to turn weak to become flesh for us, knowing that many will not love and obey him and deny him with their actions. Our God is not a God who would reject us even after we disobeyed him. Our God is a loving Lord who chose to take the path of the Via Dolorosa in our place. Our God is a God who gave himself completely for us. Our God is a God who died so that I could live. Our God is a God who is loving, and patient, and kind, who will return in glory, this time to receive those who accepted his word.

We worship and praise a living God. Yes, we do! He is a loving God, because when we were sinning he decided to become, like us, weak, and flesh. But knowing my sin is great, instead of destroying all of humankind, he decided to save us.

Come to the loving God! He left all he could for you. The Lord tells us, "Wake up!"

Angelica Villalobos
Hispanic Religious Education Student

March 11, 2025

Tuesday of the First Week of Lent

Isaiah 55: 10-11

Matthew 6: 7-15

From all their distress God rescues the just.

I think today's readings convey two very important messages. The first message from the prophet Isaiah is a call to serve God. When the Lord said, "*Giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats,*" he is talking about every person who believes in him. We are all called to serve the Lord and do his will, but how?

And that leads to the second important message in today's gospel, where Jesus taught us to pray the "Our Father." In his compassionate way Jesus showed us how simple it is to pray. Our words need not be impressive, we just need to truly open our hearts in prayer to the Father. The point is to come to God in prayer frequently. He will indeed, hear and answer us.

Daily prayer has become a central part of my life and my car is my "War Room." Whenever I get in my car I bless myself and life up my 'whats' in prayer, asking the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit to help me and guide me so I can do his will.

During this Holy Lenten season I pray that you will grow closer to our Lord, coming to him through prayer throughout the day, and trusting that he hears and knows what you need, and will tell you how you can serve him. For Jesus said, "*Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*"

Kathy Guarino
Greeter and Bulletin Editor

March 12, 2025

Wednesday of the First Week of Lent

Jonah 3: 1-10

Luke 11: 29-32

A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.

If we look at Jonah's story before today's gospel, Jonah didn't want to do what God asked him to do because it was hard and challenging and scary. He couldn't understand why God would want him to go to a people not his own (the Ninevites) and it seemed too difficult and absurd to make himself vulnerable with his enemy.

In the gospel Jesus was commenting about the blindness of this generation. We similarly find it hard to listen to Jesus because it often seems like he's asking too much of us for something we don't understand or even care about. We try really hard to find the ease and comfort in life, and when Jesus asks us to do something hard and challenging and scary, we do a lot of mental gymnastics to avoid it. Sometimes we need that outside person to give us perspective: Jonah to the Ninevites, and Jesus, God himself, to us.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let us realize that the choices we make, either to listen or not to listen, make a difference. God will honor our decisions. He pivots right along with us, giving us the perspective we need, sometimes from outsiders and sometime closer to home. Let us pray for the openness to see where God is calling us, and the courage to follow through.

Henry Lesher, Confirmandi

Catherine Lesher, Lector

Chris Lesher, Knights of Columbus

March 13, 2025

Thursday of the First Week of Lent

Esther C: 12, 14-16, 23-25

Matthew 7: 7-12

Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me.

Today's readings tell us that we are to pray to God. Esther prayed for her people and for courage. Matthew says to pray constantly. He insinuates that God wants to give us what we want. That begs the question: Why do we not always get what we ask for?

As a parent and grandparent I do not always give the children what they ask for. I know what they want is not necessarily good for them or needed by them. That being said, I have been generous in giving them things they have asked for if such things are truly needed and deserved.

The final line in Matthew's gospel is what is commonly referred to as "The Golden Rule." We should always strive to do good deeds. These would include even simple things like holding a door open for someone, paying for the person's coffee/sandwich who is in line behind you, allowing a fellow driver to merge into your lane, picking up the trash from your neighbor's lawn.

How great would it be if, in addition to doing good deeds, we prayed for others? Think of not just the people we know who need our prayers but also pray for random strangers who might be silently carrying a heavy burden. What an amazing way to show love and compassion during Lent and beyond!



Steve Howard
Usher/Greeter

March 14, 2025

Friday of the First Week of Lent

Ezekiel 18: 21-28

Matthew 5: 20-26

If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, who can stand?



When I read today's reading and gospel it inspired me to remember each day to forgive people because you do not want to withhold forgiveness until the end of your life. God doesn't hold back on forgiving me, and I shouldn't hold back on forgiving others. Sometimes forgiveness is hard but it is important to God, so it should be important to us. God has no limit to forgiveness as even Jesus forgave the soldiers who were at the cross. So, I can use this for inspiration for myself to forgive people around me.



Ainsley Messina
Quest Teen Member

March 15, 2025

Saturday of the First Week of Lent

Deuteronomy 26: 16-19

Matthew 5: 43-48

Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

How many times have you held a grudge or been upset because someone struck a nerve with you? It is so easy to stay upset and focus on hurt feelings or how you have been wronged. When it comes down to it, the last thing you want to do is love them, bless them, and pray for them. But this is exactly what Jesus is asking us to do. These readings today remind us that Jesus calls us to forgive and love others, even our enemies, unconditionally. Jesus instructs us to make peace with our adversaries and avoid situations where conflicts can grow out of control. When we uphold the commandments we are living the life that Jesus wants us to live. Jesus asks us to strive for perfection, even when we seem far less than perfect. Today ask God to give you the grace to be able to forgive those who have offended you. When you forgive, this allows God to fill your heart with love for everyone who has mistreated you.



Allison Dinnocenzo
Eucharistic Minister

March 16, 2025

Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15: 5-12, 17-18 Philippians 3: 17-4: 1 Luke 9: 28b-36

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

TRUST

Trust is a part of our everyday lives. We trust that the food we buy is safe; the appliances we use will work; the job we work will pay us. These are automatic and we really don't think about these and many other such occurrences in our daily lives. At all ages, especially younger ones, there are decisions made about who can we trust to be a good friend and not betray our trust or hurt us. As children get older, parents have to learn to trust their children, that they will make good choices. These are concrete and deliberate choices that we make, and sometimes we can err in who we trust.

In today's reading, Abraham makes a deliberate decision to trust God. There is no fire or brimstone, no threat, and he chooses freely. God rewards him with offspring more numerous than the stars. That is not to say that placing trust in God will result in all our prayers and wishes being granted!

In my life I have come to believe that especially in those stressful times, when I place my trust in God and am willing to accept his ways and not my own, I can be at peace and find strength. And maybe that is what trust is all about.

**Thomas Germino
Parishioner**



March 17, 2025

Monday of the Second Week of Lent

Daniel 9: 4b-10

Luke 6: 36-38

Lord, do not deal with us according to our sins.

Today's readings reinforce a few of the principles I try to remember to follow. Don't judge, forgive, and be charitable. I feel these often go hand in hand.

Don't judge. I may not know, understand, or have experienced the reasons why someone else acted as they did. I know that the older I get and the more I experience and understand others' perspectives, the more I can understand why someone else would act differently than me. I also know that I myself have done strange things in the past, that, as I have gotten older and hopefully wiser, I may not do today. I hope those in my past don't judge me too harshly and would forgive me. God will judge us all someday. I remind myself it is not my place to judge others.

Forgive and let go. Just as I hope others forgive me, I need to give forgiveness and move on without a grudge. Forgiving without always judging others frees my own spirit to be lighter. If I hold a grudge, I have not forgiven.

Be charitable. There are many ways I can show charity to others. Giving more of my own time to others is just one. During my life I have received charity in many forms. Today, I am now able to give more to others. Actually, giving to others lifts my own spirit.

Pam Carroll
Hooks and Needles

March 18, 2025

Tuesday of the Second Week of Lent

Isaiah 1: 10, 16-20

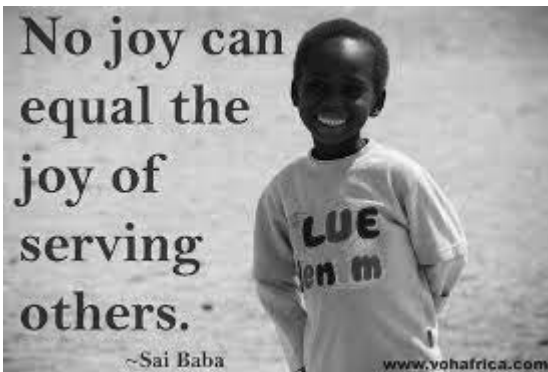
Matthew 23: 1-12

To the upright I will show the saving power of God.

It feels like both passages are calling people out—first, for ignoring justice and mercy, and second, for being hypocrites. The first reading reminds us that if you are good, you are doing what you should, but if you ignore what's right you're asking for trouble. It's like a warning and a second chance at the same time.

The gospel is straight-up exposing fake leaders. It's saying that real greatness isn't about looking important, but about serving others. That kind of flips what society teaches: power isn't about status, but humility.

Both messages make me think about how easy it is to say the right thing, but not actually live it out. It's a reminder to be real; help people and not get caught up in trying to *look* good instead of *being* good. If I want to be respected I need to live with honesty, not just talk about it.



John Ellis
Quest Teen Member

March 19, 2025

Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Samuel 7: 4-5a, 12-14a, 16 Romans 4: 13, 16-18, 22

Matthew 1: 16, 18-21, 24a

The son of David will live forever.

Dominic Grassi, in his book Bumping into God, tells a story about his father. He says that when Dominic was growing up his father was strong. He did physical work. He hoisted heavy bags. Eventually, as it does for all of us, his father grew older, and weaker, and was frustrated that he wasn't the young, strong dad any longer.

We don't know a lot about Joseph, Jesus' (step) father. He had to be strong enough to teach Jesus his trade, we do know that. Boys learn how to be men from watching their fathers-that makes me think that Joseph must have been a really wonderful father. I suspect Jesus worked with his father, too. My husband worked with his father and I don't think he'd give up a day of that time.

Young fathers today seem to be wonderfully involved with their children. I see hugs and hear positive words of affection. Don't ever pass up an opportunity to say "I love you" to your father. Fathers, don't pass up the chance to tell you kids that you are proud of them. My guess is that Jesus must have known how much Joseph loved him, because as an adult Jesus was kind, and caring, and yes, loving. Those are things the human Jesus learned from his human dad.

God, our heavenly father, is kind, and caring, and loving. We need to tell God, every day, how much we love him.

**Frances Roser
Parishoner**

March 20, 2025

Thursday of the Second Week of Lent

Jeremiah 17: 5-10

Luke 16: 19-31

Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

In reading the passages it occurred to me that there is a theme that appears within that relates to every Mass. Coming to Mass reaffirms our bond with the Lord and allows for the nurturing that only the word of the Lord can provide, while not nurturing the bond with the Lord causes one's faith to wither and not grow. Following in the steps of Jesus and reaffirming one's faith allows us to weather any storm that might come, and still allow for our faith to remain strong and grow.

Coming to Mass with my family and learning the teachings of the Lord are things that I look forward to every week. The bond that we all share with the Lord is a special one and watching it grow in my children is a simple joy that energizes my faith.

Erik Anderson
Parishioner



March 21, 2025

Friday of the Second Week of Lent

Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a Matthew 21: 33-43, 45-46

Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

Being born the 5th of 9 children I can relate to the story of Joseph, son of Israel, and his brothers. Kids, especially the older ones in the family, feel put-upon when jobs are assigned to some, while the others are treated more like children. The fact that Joseph was almost the youngest son and reminded Israel of his deceased wife gave him status and special treatment over his older brothers.

My oldest siblings were 10, 12, and 14 years older than me; just old enough to get saddled with the care of their 6 younger siblings. Also, just old enough to feel real teenaged resentment for having to act as “shepherds” to the unruly mob that we could be. They had to forego many opportunities to be carefree teens.

I only realized the difficulty my parents had in raising our crew when I had three children of my own. My kids were all close in age, so they weren’t required to watch out for the youngest. My husband, Henry, and I had an “all for one and one for all” mentality. What one kid did, all three did. All three swam competitively, walked together to their piano lessons and bowled in a kid’s league. Things got a little hectic when each one started high school and couldn’t share scheduled activities any more, but they had learned to appreciate what they’d shared during their “all for one” years.

Gail Nonaka
St. Vincent DePaul Society

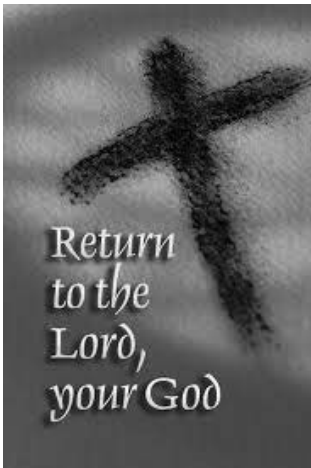
March 22, 2025

Saturday of the Second Week of Lent

Micah 7: 14-15, 18-20 Luke 5: 1-3, 11-32

The Lord is kind and merciful.

Both of these readings share a special message that should be passed to all of us. Even though we may stray away from God, he will always accept us back. Straying away from God, especially in these times, happens even when you may not think you do. The littlest of sins, like fighting with our siblings or disobeying our parents, can affect our relationship with God. But, all you have to do to get closer is to ask God to forgive your sins and he will. God wants you to be part of his family and grow in the church with everyone around you. Sinning and not making the right choices are part of human nature. Not everyone is at their best all the time, but God is always looking out for us.



Gianna Bittner
8th Grader at St. Michael School

March 23, 2025

Third Sunday of Lent

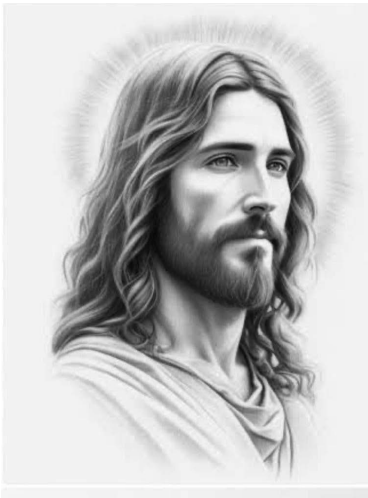
Exodus 3: 1-8a, 13-15 1Corinthians 10: 1-6, 10-12 Luke 13: 1-9

The Lord is kind and merciful.

A few weeks ago I was asked to reflect on today's scripture readings. God said to Moses, "*Moses, Moses*" in the burning bush. Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look at God. I can relate to this in my journey in my Catholic faith from my early school days to my retirement days now. I was afraid to look at the face of Our Lord because I felt unworthy. But we are all sinners who try to repent. He has called me to not be afraid, and to look at his face.

I praise God for his presence in the Eucharist. There is kindness and mercy in the face of Jesus. O Lord, I need you!

He is with me and you, too. We are all God's children. What does the face of Jesus look like to you?



Susan Stratton
Hooks and Needles

March 24, 2025

Monday of the Third Week of Lent

2 Kings 5: 1-15ab

Luke 4: 24-30

Thirst is my soul for the living God.

In 2 Kings and in Luke we are told of a man named Naaman who leads the army of the king of Aram. Although such a powerful man, he had leprosy, giving him a sense of vulnerability that was unfamiliar to him. As the chapter progresses, we see Naaman travel to Israel to the prophet Elisha who requests that Naaman wash himself in the Jordan River. Naaman agrees and becomes free of leprosy, which makes the people of Israel enraged that a foreigner received this special treatment.

We often can forget that God is with us even if we are not physically with him at church or in prayer. But believing in God grants you protection through all of life's biggest and smallest battles—from losing a loved one, to taking a big test, to simply wanting help with a decision. God is here as the shoulder to lean on, and that can be difficult to remember in tough times. Our Father is like no other in the sense that he refuses to give up on his people, even in times of anger or disbelief. God does not discriminate as the people of Israel do, and welcomes all into his kingdom. He teaches us that practicing our faith and living out his virtues is of utmost value, and that trust makes us his children.



Cait Patula
Quest Council Co-President

March 25, 2025

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

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

Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

In today's readings we see Ahaz, Jesus, and Mary with three very different encounters with God. They are all being called to trust in God's plan for them. Just like God had a plan for each of them, God has a plan for each of us. Sometimes it can be hard when God's path for us doesn't make sense or doesn't look the way we thought it would be.

I can recall when I was looking for a new job years ago, and after several interviews I didn't receive any new offers. I started questioning, how does my experience not qualify me for these jobs? As time went on I soon began to realize God's work wasn't done for me at my current job. I was able to find peace in trusting God's plan for me and my career. A few years later I decided to start looking for a new job again. I reminded myself, no matter what happens, to trust in what God's plan was for me. Seemingly enough, God opened the door right away for me and the job was exactly what I was looking for.

Just like Ahaz, Jesus, and Mary, we need to trust in God's individual path for us, as he knows the wonderful life we are each called to live.



**Meg and David Michaels
Parishioners**

March 26, 2025

Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent

Deuteronomy 4: 1, 5-9

Matthew 5: 17-19

Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.



Strengthening our faith in Jesus requires a big commitment to prayer, reading scripture, and living out his teachings in our daily lives in a world filled with distractions and challenges. We must intentionally seek him through personal prayer, the sacraments, and acts of love and service. By trusting in God's plan and surrendering our fears, and by practicing humility we grow closer to him. Reflecting on his sacrifice and his boundless mercy reminds us that faith is just not only about belief, but a transformative relationship that calls us to love, forgive, and serve others as our Lord Jesus Christ did.

Fernando Garcia
Hispanic Religious Education Student

March 27, 2025

Thursday of the Third Week of Lent

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

If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

God gives us options but we need to choose him. With everything in life he is offering us a choice to follow the path for our earthly journey. God invites us, never forces us. For me, God has laid out certain circumstances in my family life; I could either “trust and follow” or “fight and oppose.” I have chosen to trust and follow.



In Jeremiah, “*Thus says the Lord, ‘But this command I gave them, Obey my voice and I shall be your God and you shall be my people; and walk in all the ways that I command you, that it may be well with you.’*” God wants us to trust him. If we make the choice to follow, we need to trust God and his best interests for

our lives. To choose to follow him, but not trust the path, will not lead us to where we are supposed to be.

In the Gospel reading, it ends with “*he who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.*” If we trust we won’t be divided from God and he’ll give us the armor needed for life. We need to trust God through the journey of life, through it all. Trust and follow. I’ve heard how God gives us only enough light to take the next step. We don’t know our earthly journey ahead, so we need to take all the steps in faith and trust in him.

Justin Sonneveld
Parishioner

March 28, 2025

Friday of the Third Week of Lent

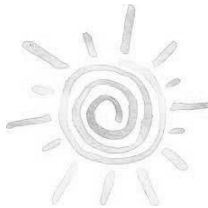
Hosea 14: 2-10

Mark 12: 28-34

I am the Lord your God: hear my voice.

When asked, “*what is the greatest Commandment?*” Jesus said, “*There is only one God, and you must love him with all your heart, your soul, all your mind.*” I wonder how many of us get so caught up in everyday life, searching for happiness in “things or activities,” that we forget what can bring us that peace we may be seeking? I know, personally, I get so busy with my family and work I don’t always put God first. Yes, I go to church and I try to be a good person, but I don’t think that means I’m remembering the most important Commandment. It is so easy to make him an afterthought, to just know he’ll always be there when you need him, like an old friend we take for granted.

But, when life shakes us, he’s the first one we call out to. And he is always there, even when we don’t think he hears us. So, this Lent my goal is to start each day with God, even if it is just a small, silent prayer, because I need him there in good times and bad. He is the rock that can steady me and carry me through the storms (and sunshine) of life.



**The O'Donnell Family
Parishoners**

March 29, 2025

Saturday of the Third Week of Lent

Hosea 6: 1-6

Luke 18: 9-14

It is mercy I desire, and not sacrifice.

Hosea and Luke both highlight God's desire for true repentance and humility over empty religious practices. They remind me to examine my heart when it comes to my faith. Life gets busy, and some Sundays I struggle to make it to church, whether from exhaustion, family obligations, or just feeling unmotivated. I ask myself, "Am I truly seeking God, or just doing what I'm supposed to do?"

Hosea warns how easily devotion can fade, and in Luke Jesus contrasts self-righteousness with true humility. The tax collector, who simply asks for mercy, is the one justified. That challenges me. Am I coming before God with a humble heart, or just checking a box?

These passages remind me that God isn't asking for perfection, he is asking for sincerity. Even when life gets in the way I want my faith to be real, not just routine. Church isn't about being seen—it's about seeking God. And even when I struggle, his mercy is always there to restore me. Plus, Mass gives me a community of good people who help me grow in faith.



March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Joshua 5: 9a, 10-12 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21 Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

If you are only reading the scriptures today you are missing one of the many add-ons in liturgy. Today is Laetare Sunday: the vestments are rose or pink in color and are a significant change in the normal Lenten colors. The word itself means “joyful” in Latin. That joy is also reflected in

today’s readings — the joy of recognizing God’s unlimited love for us, and the unlimited reconciliation that is offered to us if we have faith.



God’s love for us is beyond our understanding, but through the Spirit we are continually in his presence. He is patient in offering us his love and mercy; gifting us, providing us all that we need, and waiting for our response. We know the story of The Prodigal Son, today’s gospel. The ending moves me the most. Watching the father’s joy in the son’s return brings hope to a heart that seeks the Lord. The quietness and darkness of Lent gives way to today’s joyful affirmation of our God’s love, mercy, and desire for us-me and you-to change and return to the Lord.

This Lenten season we are rushing toward Easter. Our Lord Jesus Christ reclaims us as his own. My hope is to see the joy on the Father’s face when I (we) return to him.

Deacon Mike McDonough

March 31, 2025

Monday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Isaiah 65: 17-21 John 4: 43– 54

I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

As a senior in high school preparing for the next chapter of my life-college education-I encounter stress and anxiety on a whole new level. While I may be anxious to leave home and start my new life, Isaiah reminds me that *“the former things will not be remembered,”* showing me that college acts as a new beginning for me, allowing me to free myself from the previous stress I have endured if I hold my faith closely. Living hand-in-hand with my faith allows the Lord to walk with me every step of the way.

After thinking of these readings for a while, I have realized that dedicating time to my faith, and acknowledging that God is with me will allow me to strive to never ignore the good that God does for me as I end my high school career, begin college, and continue my life.

Addison Hinkes
Quest Council



April 1, 2025

Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12

John 5: 1-16

The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.



The first thing that came to mind was how I recently came to the faith after being away from the church for so long. Ezekiel speaks of the flowing waters from the temple that nourish life. Reading the Bible, praying, and going to church fill me with a true peace and joy I had never known until letting Jesus into my life.

T. Daley
Parishioner



April 2, 2025

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

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

The Lord is gracious and merciful.

Today's first reading from Isaiah reminds us that God will always be with us, and that his unwavering love is steady and true. In today's gospel passage, we see how God communicates his love through Jesus Christ and we hear foreshadowing regarding the resurrection.

Four weeks ago today we received ashes on Ash Wednesday marking the start of our Lenten journey, and in two weeks we will start Holy Week. Lent, like life, tends to go fast and slow simultaneously. Having these Lenten reflections helps remind us to take the pause in our daily routine to reflect on the readings and spend some quiet time in prayer. Knowing God's love is steadfast may be just what we all need to hear no matter how busy life is, or becomes!

**Kelly McHugh
Parishioner**



April 3, 2025

Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Exodus 32: 7-14

John 5: 31-47

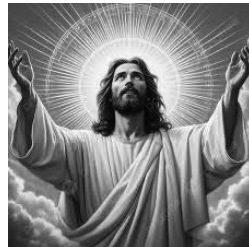
Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.

The passage from John shows how people had been speaking about Jesus. The scriptures had foretold people about Jesus; now they were shown his power, and told directly by God to believe in Jesus as his son, but the people missed the message because they cared more about human praise than about believing in Jesus. Jesus didn't need their approval, and neither should we. We should praise him in glory on his own.

All this has been shown to me; we don't need people to make us believe in God, we have the scriptures to guide us to find direction in our lives. We must avoid pride in seeking God's heavenly glory, even when it's hard, because in Jesus' time most didn't believe even after seeing with their own eyes.

In my life, in easy and in difficult times, I always see God's power. Just by opening my eyes-he gave me life and I try to see, feel, and live the life he gave me. It is more than enough to know and believe in God. In my life, believing in God has helped in big ways, and in ways as simple as the decisions I make by asking myself if this decision is for my glory or God's glory? I keep God at the center of everything I do, and let him guide me through life.

Gabriel Garcia
Hispanic Religious Education
Student



April 4, 2025

Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Wisdom 2: 1a, 12-22

John 7: 1-2, 10, 25-30

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.

My thoughts regarding these readings highlight the personal and worldly challenges we all have in being faithful to our God. Reflecting on the things that go on in our world and personal and family lives, such as family tragedies, illness, death, financial and relationship troubles, it is easy to question whether God is looking out for us. I'm sure we've all heard both believers and non-believers say something like, "Why would God allow this to happen?" These events in our lives make it difficult at times to trust in our faith and in our God. However, these readings encourage us to stay strong in our faith in God when we face life's difficulties. Just as Jesus showed courage in traveling to Judea despite the risk of being killed by the Jews, we too must stay strong and show courage and our trust in our God when facing the difficulties of our world and our lives.

Lisa Kula

St. Michael School Parent



April 5, 2025

Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Jeremiah 11: 18-20 John 7: 40-53

O Lord, my God, in you I take refuge.

I'm struck by the awe of the temple guards. For me, reading the Bible can sometimes be a checklist item. The reading from John reminds me that God wants to transform us by his word, and lead us to feel awe like the temple guards. He wants us not to just read the Bible like any other book, but to have an encounter with him each and every time we read Scripture.

This reading also reminds me of what faith is. It's not something that can be scientifically measured. Rather, it is a belief in who Jesus is and trusting what he said. In a culture that is constantly sending messages that Christianity is ludicrous or untrue, this reading reminds me of what convinced me of my faith back in college, and that was an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist. That conviction can't be proven, but it's no less real than any other experience I've had in my life. Jesus continues to speak to me in ways no one has ever spoken and remembering this helps strengthen my faith in times of doubt.

Alyssa Mitchell
Friend of St. Michael



April 6, 2025

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 43: 16-21 Philippians 3: 8-14 John 8: 1-11

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

Today's gospel is a powerful reminder about the dangers of judgment and the importance of mercy. The Pharisees want Jesus to condemn a woman caught in adultery. Jesus challenges the Pharisees by reminding them that there is no one without fault. It is easy to think negatively about others in order to boost our own self esteem. However, putting others down based on their actions or beliefs only makes us view the world through a cynical eye. Judgment clouds our ability to see with compassion. In today's gospel Jesus calls us to reflect on our own imperfections and extend this grace to others.



By forgiving the woman's sin Jesus offered her a new chance to live differently. This passage reminds us that God's grace and love for us can never be changed. This passage encourages us to be slow to judge, quick to forgive, and mindful of the mercy we have received.

Elsie Koch
Quest Teen

April 7, 2025

Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Daniel 13: 1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 John 8: 12-20

Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

My intent for this life and my faith journey is Christ's life to be lived in me, but I am full of follies and faults. "O Felix Culpa, que mericio tan grande Redemptor" (Oh happy fault that granted me/you/us intimacy with the Great Redeemer: Father-God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit.)

My virtue of faith cannot move mountains, however, I have prayed over smaller problems—like clogged toilets. It is very humbling when they do not unclog. Whether by miracle, or elbow grease, by the grace of God, the toilet always gets unclogged. Then I rejoice, pray, and praise to glorify and thank God.

Many life scenarios are like the analogy of "the clogged toilet," however regretful memories haunt me every so often about past occasions where I was not trusting of the Lord. I am unlike Susanna and Joakin who were devout and trusting of the Lord, only to have inevitably God's merciful justice, lowly wrath and amazing grace be miraculously fulfilled.

I am a sinner struggling for perfection and holiness to do God's will; ergo, I ought not have to be lacking the state of grace, nor be in fearful anxiety because Jesus reminds me over and over, with Godly proof, *"Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (John 8: 12)

Per regnum Christi ad gloriam Dei

(For the Kingdom of Christ, to the glory of God)

Lloyd Fojas

Missionary Families of Christ Ministry

April 8, 2025

Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Numbers 21: 4-9

John 8: 21-30

O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

O wonderful. Today we get a very uplifting reading from the Old Testament. People are complaining about eating boring food and as a punishment God sends them snakes that bite and kill them! Sounds like a lot of dinners at my house—kids complaining about boring food. Too bad I couldn't have brought the snakes out. They would have quieted down pretty quickly!

Fr. Mike Schmitz from Ascension Press says the people weren't just complaining but they were rebelling. They were looking backwards, but wearing rose colored glasses about their time in Egypt.

I can choose to look backwards, or choose to look ahead. Backwards lies some good, some bad—love and angst, successes and failures. Ahead lies the Resurrection and Heaven. Between now and then is probably more love and angst, successes and some failures, but I know that I want a life filled with God, so....what changes do I need to make?



Tony Gagliano
Parishioner

April 9, 2025

Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Daniel 3: 14-20, 91-92, 95

John 8: 31-42

Glory and praise for ever!



In today's world it is becoming more difficult by the day to keep focused on how important our faith needs to be. Social media, television, movies etc. are always bombarding us with their lies of how their products/ideas will make our lives better and happier. We should think about what their messages encourage us to do, such as promote vanity, compete with family and friends to purchase more worldly possessions that we really don't need, and perhaps spend more time online playing games or spending the family's income. It's certainly easy to fall into those traps if your faith isn't strong, isn't it? A few minutes each day can lead to hours of self-destruction and eventually our main focus becomes unimportant and lost. Let's perhaps ask for guidance and grace each day to minimize the world's temptations and keep our goals in order. Our Lord is a gracious and forgiving God and he will heed our requests if we keep him first in our daily lives. My personal motto has always been "Never Give Up" and I try to always put my faith first when faced with life's challenges. No one is perfect, but we must always try.

**Mary Fei
Greeter**

April 10, 2025

Thursday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Genesis 17: 3-9

John 8: 51-59

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

These passages remind me of the importance of yielding to God. When Abraham fell facedown, this was not only an act of yielding, but a likely encounter with the dirt. To me, it is a reminder that all things flow through God, and, while we are dust, it is God who picks us up out of the dirt, gives us life, and provides for us now and eternally.



Joe Mitchell
Friend of St. Michael



April 11, 2025

Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Jeremiah 20: 10-13

John 10: 31-42

In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice.



Faith is the foundation of my relationship with God, serving as the guiding principle for how I live my life. In today's reading Jesus faced opposition and betrayal as we can see in society today. As a child of God, embracing simplicity in my faith allows me to remain open to his presence and more aware of my surroundings. A humble and sincere heart is more receptive to his truth, fostering a deeper connection with him. By trusting in God and focusing on his works and promises, I can live a life rooted in his love and grace.

Matthew Forbes
Quest Teen Member

April 12, 2025

Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Ezekiel 37: 21-28

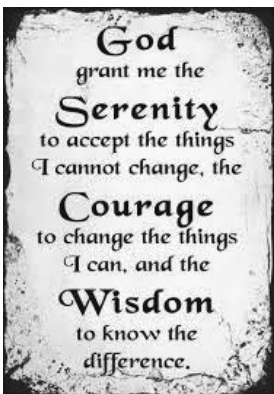
John 11: 45-56

The Lord will guard us, as a shepherd guards his flock.

As I read and re-read the readings for today one particular line stood out to me in the first reading: “*Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms.*” Sadly and realistically, things in life have a way of making us feel divided from each other. Even though my family has grown larger, our family gatherings have become smaller. I have family members that will no longer sit at the family table for holiday celebrations or attend family functions due to disagreements. It saddens me that we have given our differences so much power that allowed ourselves to grow apart.

Today, reflect on what thoughts or actions you allowed to grow a wedge between you and a loved one, or between you and yourself, and most especially, during this Lenten season, between you and God. We have to find the things that join so that we may find peace in our differences. We must use

our faith to bring us back to our family, back to ourselves, and back to God. I encourage you and your family to pray the Serenity Prayer today as a first step to find your way back to peace and back to being one family in God.



Donna Kubicz
St. Michael School Parent

April 13, 2025

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Luke 19: 28-40 Isaiah 50: 4-7

Philippians 2: 6-11 Luke 22: 14-23:56

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

The gospel and readings today remind us of a passage from the book, ***Rhythm of Life*** by Matthew Kelly. In the book Kelly tells the story of Leonardo Da Vinci painting the Last Supper. Da Vinci sought models for everyone in the painting. While in church he was drawn to someone in the choir who was perfect for the model of Jesus. He went on to find someone for everyone in the painting, but he could not find his Judas. When he returned to the painting after 11 years he realized he would find his Judas in prison. After arranging for a prisoner to come to his studio and pose for the painting, the prisoner soon began to weep. When DaVinci inquired what was making the prisoner weep he revealed that he had posed as Jesus for this same painting 11 years earlier. As Matthew Kelly states, there is a Jesus and Judas in all of us.

Every day we have the ability to decide who we want to be. We can be courageous in our faith, humble in our nature, positive in our outlook and moral in our character and actions. Let's consciously look for those opportunities. We may never know the magnitude of a simple smile, or a friendly hello. We have the ability to brighten someone's day. Let's choose to be like Jesus.

Dave and Laura Drzonek
Parishioners

April 14, 2025

Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42: 1-7

John 12: 1-11

The Lord is my light and my salvation.



As we enter Holy Week and prepare for Jesus' death and resurrection I am struck by the words from the Book of Isaiah about *"the chosen one with whom I am pleased."* The Savior is described as one who will not cry out, shout, or even make his voice heard in the street. Experiencing the Lord's presence is compared to breath and light—he will even take you by the hand.

More than a movement or a cultural revolution "in the streets," today's readings make me reflect on how being a Christian is ultimately about being open to a close personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Ryen Nagle

Parents and Families at the Center of Faith Formation

April 15, 2025

Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49: 1-6

John 13: 21-33, 36-38

I will sing of your salvation.

In both readings we are called to notice God's grace and forgiveness. When we are baptized into the faith, God gives us grace; even though we are not deserving of it-we should strive to be worthy of God's grace and forgiveness. God extends his grace to everyone and teaches us to do the same.

It is hard to give grace to those that we think do not deserve it, much like the older son thought of his younger brother in the gospel of the Prodigal Son. Many times we compare ourselves to what we see others receive. God loves us all equally, and he has given us all exactly what we need.

Accepting God's plan for us as well as his grace can be tricky. I propose these questions to help guide us all to acceptance and forgiveness:

How can I be worthy of God's forgiveness?

How does God give us grace?

And how do I give it to others?

How can I accept God's plan for me?

**Nadia Horak
Parishioner**



April 16, 2025

Wednesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 50: 4-9a

Matthew 26: 14-25

Lord, in your great love, answer me.

When I was asked to reflect on a Lenten reading I was first honored, then scared. Scared of what reading I would be asked to reflect on, scared of what others would like of my own reflections.

Judas' betrayal can be reflected on in so many ways today. I believe when someone is faced with fully trusting someone and you find out that this someone has been disloyal to you, you have a very difficult decision to make. Do you face this person with revenge and hate, and turn your back on them? Or do you respond like Jesus did with forgiveness and love? He would want us to forgive the violation of trust.

Everyone of us has been guilty of some type of betrayal to someone we love. Maybe not in the way Judas betrayed Jesus but in some way we have committed betrayal. Whether it was impulsive or plotted out, nobody is perfect. But, we ask for forgiveness, we try to be better, we come forward to our friend, our family or our co-worker.

Jesus teaches us that although it is easier to lash out, to hate, to disown, we can instead seek to understand why, we can forgive, we can give this to Jesus. Betrayal is such an ugly word and feeling. I'd much rather try to live with the ability to forgive, to try and be honest even when we have been disloyal.

Denise Geraci
Parishioner

April 17, 2025

Holy Thursday, Evening Mass of the Lord's Last Supper

Exodus 12: 1-8, 11-14

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

John 13: 1-15

Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

On Holy Thursday two sacraments are instituted— Eucharist and Holy Orders.

I remember my First Communion Day. In rehearsal the Sisters used a clicker as a prompt to genuflect. This was important for me because my cousin and I led the procession. Although I may not have fully understood the sacrament, I felt the Lord's presence. The Sisters used the acronym **ALTAR** to teach us how we should pray after Communion: **ADORE** the Lord, **LOVE** the Lord, **THANK** the Lord, **ASK** the Lord, make **REPARATION** to the Lord and to those whom we have wronged. Eucharist means thanksgiving. Blessed Solanus Casey, a Capuchin priest who died in 1957, said we should "Thank God ahead of time" trusting that God will provide what we need.

As for Holy Orders, the priest has a unique role in the celebration of the Eucharist, where he acts in the "person of Christ." That's a big responsibility and a special calling. Preaching the Word of God, celebrating the sacraments and being available to people—let us pray for them and appreciate their selflessness and sacrifice.

How can I make a return to the Lord for all He has given me? Follow his example, never forget his call to serve one another, and give thanks, always, for everything.

Carol Gianoli
Lector

April 18, 2025

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Hebrews 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9 John 18:1-19: 42
Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Good Friday always reminds me of the depth of Jesus' love for us. When I read about his suffering in Isaiah, how he was "*pierced for our offenses*" and "*crushed for our sins*," it is humbling. As a wife, mom, and full-time professional I juggle a lot, and there are moments when the weight of it all can feel heavy. But when I reflect on Jesus' sacrifice it puts everything into perspective. He chose to endure all that pain, not for his own sake, but for us—so we could experience God's love and forgiveness.

In Hebrews it comforts me to know that Jesus understands our struggles, that he's walked through suffering himself. This gives me hope in my own challenges. Knowing that he gave everything for us fills me with gratitude and strength.

On this Good Friday I'm reminded that his love is always with me, encouraging me to keep going-whether at work, at home or in the everyday moments-trusting that his grace is greater than anything I face.



**Nicole Hajdrowski,
Parishioner**

April 19, 2025

Easter Vigil

Genesis 1:1—2:2

Genesis 22: 1-8

Exodus 14: 15—15:1

Isaiah 55: 1-11

Romans 6: 3-11

Luke 24: 1-12

Lord, send out your spirit and renew the face of the Earth.

We have traveled this Lent on a Journey of Hope. Hope for what? Were you hoping for better grades, a new job, a better country, peace in the world? What about hope for an eternal life? On this most holy of nights we hear of the creation of the world through the power of God's words. We hear God asking Abraham to sacrifice his only son. God spares Isaac, but we remember that God actually did sacrifice **his** only Son, Jesus, for us so that we can have eternal life. God saves his people again when he helps them escape from the Egyptians. We hear of the power of God's salvation and that God knows our worries and fears and will give us the hope that we long for. God has a covenant with us to bring us to hope and peace. We have been baptized and cleansed from original sin but we need to avoid sin and follow Jesus to receive eternal life. We see God's work in all these accounts of God's love, we see God's work in everything to save and transform us.

This Lent our journey takes us to the women at the tomb of Jesus who are told that Jesus has done what he said he would do—rise on the third day! Jesus conquered death for us! This is the power of God's love! He continues to nourish, strength, and transform us through his word and his Body and Blood with the hope of eternal life.

Mary Beth Mallet
Pastoral Council

April 20, 2025

The Resurrection of the Lord

Acts of the Apostles 10: 34a, 37-43

Colossians 3: 1-4

John 20: 1-9

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

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.

John 20: 1-9

Alleluia!

Today throughout the world there resounds the message proclaimed two thousand years ago from Jerusalem: “Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, has been raised!” (*Mk 16:6*).

Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is risen! He alone has the power to roll away the stones that block the path to life. He, the living One, is himself that path. He is the Way: the way that leads to life, the way of peace, reconciliation and fraternity. He opens that path, humanly impossible, because he alone takes away the sin of the world and forgives us our sins. For without God’s forgiveness, that stone cannot be removed. Without the forgiveness of sins, there is no overcoming the barriers of prejudice, mutual recrimination, the presumption that we are always right and others wrong. Only the risen Christ, by granting us the forgiveness of our sins, opens the way for a renewed world.

On this day when we celebrate the life given us in the resurrection of the Son, let us remember the infinite love of God for each of us: a love that overcomes every limit and every weakness.

May the light of the resurrection illumine our minds and convert our hearts, and make us aware of the value of every human life, which must be welcomed, protected and loved.

A happy Easter to all!

Pope Francis



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