

DAILY LENTEN DEVOTIONS 2019

PRAYER, MEDITATION & STUDY



ST. VINCENT'S CATHEDRAL



ST. VINCENT'S CATHEDRAL 2019 LENTEN DEVOTIONS

Blessings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Lent is the Christian season of preparation before Easter. The Lenten season is a time when many Christians observe a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, self-denial and spiritual discipline. The purpose is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ—his suffering and his sacrifice, his life, death, burial, and resurrection.

The daily devotions in this book are based on the daily lectionary readings in Lent along with special feast days and commemorations. Each devotion is written by a member of the parish or a member of the clergy. It is our prayer and hope that these devotions will assist you in your spiritual preparation as we approach Holy Week and the great saving acts of our Incarnate God.

We encourage you to read the Scriptures assigned for each day along with the devotion and then spend some time in prayer and reflection on Jesus and what he has done for you.

Feel free to share these with friends, family, and neighbors. I want to thank everyone who contributed to this devotional book and the volunteer and staff who compiled, edited, and printed these booklets. Additional copies are available from the parish office.

May the crucified and risen Lord fill your hearts this Lent and may we all share in the joy of the Easter message that He is Risen.

Ryan S. Reed

Because He lives,

The Very Rev. Ryan S. Reed
Dean
St. Vincent's Cathedral
Bedford, Texas
Lent 2019



Ash Wednesday, March 6th

“Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God; let your good Spirit lead me on level ground.”

Psalm 143:10

Life is full of ups and downs. We sometimes encounter unexpected difficulties or dangerous curves in the road ahead. To be human is to live with unpredictability. To be Christian is to live by simple faith and a childlike trust in God. Each day, we pray the Holy Spirit to teach us how to please God and to lead us on level ground, to make our paths smooth and straight.

To be human is also to be frail sinners, who often stumble and fall. Many times we do not please God or follow the guidance of the Spirit. As Christians, we often need times to repent, to ask forgiveness, and to start all over again. Ash Wednesday is such a day, and Lent is such a season – 40 days for daily self-examination, repentance, and new starts. In our daily prayers and Bible readings, we find that the mercy and loving kindness of the Lord is abundant and new every morning.

In secular terms, we always celebrate New Year’s Day as an opportunity for a fresh new start, and we adopt various well-intentioned resolutions, intended to help us become healthier, or happier, or better people. In the Church Year, Advent is the beginning of a new year for Christians, full of hope and joy as we prepare to receive the promised Messiah, who will save us and deliver us from our sins. And here, too, we must cooperate with grace, by seeking a new start, with daily disciplines of prayer, Bible study, and meditation. So what shall we resolve to do this Lent?

Nearly every church in our Diocese offers some sort of Lenten program or weekday Eucharist to help us learn how to please God and follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. My call to each of you this Lent, as a faithful member of our Church family, is to take part in such opportunities for spiritual growth and maturity. Worship God every Sunday in His Church, and in addition to whatever other things you may give up or take on in your Lenten Rule of Life, make time for a weekday mass as well or study series. If for any reason your church isn’t able to provide this, perhaps you can visit a congregation not far away.

“Teach me and help me, oh God, each day, how to please you where your Spirit leads.”

The Rt. Rev. Jack Leo Iker
Third Bishop of Fort Worth in
my 26th year of consecration

Psalm 32, 95, 102, 130, 143

Jonah 3:1-4:11

Hebrews 12:1-14

Luke

18:9-14



THURSDAY, MARCH 7TH

Who is called? You are called!

Behold, the Lamb of God! And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

John 1:34

Today, the devotion is about someone who knew that he was called to be part of God's plan, John the Baptist.

The first time that John met Jesus, he was an unborn child in Elizabeth's womb. The Bible says he leapt for joy when Mary shared her news with Elizabeth, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. (It makes sense to me that John was also filled with the Spirit at that time.) John and Jesus met again some 30 years later, as Jesus was beginning His ministry. God gave John a crucial job to do—he was to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of the long-awaited Messiah, and to make ready the way for Jesus. God revealed to John that he would know Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, by a dove (the Holy Spirit) descending and remaining on Jesus after His baptism. Mark states in his Gospel, that a voice came from heaven proclaiming that Jesus was the son of God, and that He was well pleased. What a special occasion, all three persons of the Trinity were there! (God the Father—God the Son—and God the Holy Spirit) John did what God asked of him, he bore witness and it was documented in all the gospels and was witnessed by all the people that were there.

We, too, are called as part of the body of Christ, and we all have a job to do. Some jobs are big, and some jobs are small. Let us listen closely, and invite the Spirit in so that God can reveal his will for each of us. Read His word, and pray in the spirit and let God use you. Never underestimate the power of one person to change the world. Remember, someone planted the tree that Zacchaeus climbed up!

...And now Father send us out into the world to do the work that you have given us to



FRIDAY, MARCH 8TH

Doing Good for the Sake of the Gospel

Titus was an early church leader, a trusted companion of the apostle Paul, and a faithful servant of the Lord.

You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Titus 2:1-8, 11-15

Titus speaks about matters that were fitting or suitable for healthy or wholesome teaching or instruction. His words were to contribute toward helping fellow believers to grow in faith and to make progress in living a life consistent with their faith. A “healthy” faith would be a sound, genuine, or solidly grounded faith. Love involves a selfless concern for others, a willingness to forgo one’s own interests to benefit fellow humans. A “healthy” love is genuine and strong, for it calls for courage when one’s coming to the aid of others poses serious personal risks.

Titus has given us here the message of how to live our lives and to help others as they journey through their Christian lives. It’s about our community, our Church, and the love we have for each other. We have to be examples and share this love and compassion with visitors.

Lord, we come to you on our knees and seek your continued guidance and blessings as we travel the road of life. Every day is a special day, for we know not when it may be our last. Our world is troubled as it has failed to follow your guidance. We pray that we become examples and do our best to show the way. Bless our Church and commu-



SATURDAY, MARCH 9TH

"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God."

Psalm 42

What a beautiful depiction we get in the beginning of this psalm: "As a deer pants for flowing streams, so longs my soul for you, O God." Then, it's a swift emotional descent into despair. In this particular psalm, a song leader expresses his search for God in the midst of discouragement. The psalmist longs for the days when it felt easier to praise God with "glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival;" the jubilation felt so real in the midst of corporate worship! But now, the world is bringing him down, everyone's got an opinion and a snarky remark, and he is seeking that reassurance of God's steadfast love again.

We get the whole spectrum of emotions through the psalms. This one is not a song of jubilation, but it is a song of faith. We know that God is not just contained within the four walls of the church, and yet, sometimes we struggle to find God in the midst of our circumstances. The psalmist stays afloat, though the waves crash over him, because he hangs on to his little life preserver of songs and uses them to swim out of his rut. What do you use to remind yourself of God's presence throughout the week? Whatever little gem of worship you find beautiful and holy - the hymns, the prayers, the incense - let it speak to you and reaffirm some truth about God that can keep you afloat when you are feeling cast down.

Dear Lord, Help us to seek your presence in worship and in our lives. Help us trust that you will bring us out of any rut and get us back on track. May we continue to

SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH

For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

1 Corinthians 1:19-20

What is the wisdom of this world? There are lots of ideas that seem wise on the surface, but become foolish when examined through the lens of faith. The wisdom of this world seems anything but wise when measured against God's Word.

The wise person wants to tell us that God is a myth, that religion is for the weak minded, and that anyone who has any intelligence understands these "truths". The teacher of the law says that morality is a construct of man, and that there is no higher authority than the government. The philosophers of this age tell us we're just animals, and that our behavior is programmed in our genes. If we follow the logic of these arguments, where does it lead?



Human nature surely can explain a lot of behaviors, but if we truly believed that we were just meat robots, as Scott Adams of Dilbert fame says, then we have no agency; no free will. This conveniently supports the world's atheistic beliefs, as free will is a gift from God. Continuing to unpack the logic, if we are slaves to our genetic programming, lacking free will, then nothing is our fault. Anything can be excused, because "I can't help it! I'm just a meat robot!" No need for forgiveness, the excuse is built right in.

When government is the highest authority, all laws are moral. If government were comprised of angels, this might work. Too bad it's full of people (and not always the best ones). I think the logic starts to break down here, because people are meat robots, slaves of their genes. So where does this higher moral authority come from? Few would argue that human nature is full of virtue, yet the world would have us believe there are some better robots among us who are imbued with moral authority. They tell us all the time that "It's for your own good!" Really? Then why do the ones in power always get the gold mine, while we get the shaft? This is usually the place where someone inserts a funny cat video to distract us from our uncomfortable line of questioning.

The denial of God's authority always seems to be embedded in these arguments. How can they get believers to trust in them, when their words contradict the Word of God? They need us to forget our religion, and replace our faith in God with faith in man. Everyone is telling us to follow them if we want life to be better. "Do what I say and you'll be healthier! Wealthier! Wiser! Happier!" But then, the next commercial starts, or the next sitcom, or the next news segment, and it's back to the starting point.

Thankfully, God gave us His word to guide us. How foolish is the wisdom of this world? Verse 25 goes on to say, "For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." Our hope rests with Him. We are blessed with God's Word to guide us. Man can try to deny God's Word, but the wisdom of God's word speaks to our hearts. The Ten Commandments did not come from man, for our human nature invariably leads us down the wrong path. They define morality for us, holding true over centuries and speaking directly to our human failings. Thanks be to God for His wisdom to guide us!

Dear Heavenly Father, grant us the wisdom to put our faith in you, not in man. Help us to resist the vain philosophies of the world, the claims of those who deny You, and the failed wisdom of this world. Grant that we may help more in this world to see the wisdom of the Gospel, and turn their hearts to You. Amen.



MONDAY, MARCH 11TH

They believed him....Will you believe him?

“Jesus...manifested his glory; and his disciples believed him.”

John 2:11

Embarrassment. Social pressure. Stress that threatens our peace. Emotionally charged circumstances that tempt us to take matters into our own hands. Do the problems you face draw you to Jesus, or do they push you to seek answers elsewhere? At the wedding at Cana, the disciples and Mary notice a potentially disastrous problem. Mary goes directly to Jesus and simply states “They have no wine” (vs 3). Mary then instructs the disciples “do whatever he says” (vs 5). The disciples immediately obey Jesus, fill 6 jars with water “to the brim” (vs. 7) and take it to the steward. The water having been miraculously changed to wine, is declared to be good wine even though it was served at the end of the wedding. The disciples and Mary personally and intimately see Jesus’ glory manifested. And then, something changes in the disciples’ hearts - “... they believe in him” (vs. 11).

What is your “wine”? What are you needing, where are you spiritually depleted? Health, money, status, peace, our children’s happiness can weigh heavily on our hearts. Where do you go to have your need “filled to the brim”? Social media, the news, substance abuse, shopping, even well-meaning friends can distract us for a quick fix. But we learn from the miracle at Cana that only Jesus can hear and faithfully fulfill our need. And, Jesus fills that need abundantly - “to the brim”- with the best He can offer. After your “wine” is filled, how do you respond? The disciples believed in Jesus, do you? Will you take your concerns to Jesus today, and expect Him to faithfully respond with His best?

Dear Jesus, help us to see that only You can hear our needs and faithfully provide. Increase our faith to come to you, obey your instruction, and trust you with every circumstance. Amen.

Dianne Normand
Daughter of the King

Psalms 41, 44, 52 Deuteronomy 8:11-20 Hebrews 2:11-18 John 2:1-12

TUESDAY, MARCH 12TH

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

In the temple, he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers were sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them out of



what God desires. When we attend church services, we should worship him and honor the sacrifices he made for us.

In the Old Testament, there are lots of examples of God's wrath, like the Great Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the walls of Jericho. The New Testament is about love. It's about God's love for us and his willingness to sacrifice his son for us. When God became incarnate as Jesus Christ, God chose to show us love instead of wrath. He chose to sacrifice himself rather than punish his people. This picture of an angry Jesus reminds me that God can show wrath but also show love while sacrificing everything for us. Each time I watch the news, I'm reminded of God's wrath. News stories like hurricanes, forest fires, and incurable diseases could be interpreted as demonstrations of God's wrath.

Fortunately, we see many examples of God's love in the news as well. Very often, there are reports of acts of heroism, medical miracles, and random acts of kindness.

During this Lenten season, many things will take place that may cause us to want to show our wrath, but we must remember that Lent is a season of sacrifice and grace. We must strive to be like Jesus and show our love.

Tex and Jeanine Chapman
Music teacher and Systems analyst
Youth and Sunday school ministry

Psalms 45, 47, 48
2:13-22

Deuteronomy 9:4-12

Hebrews 3:1-11

John

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13TH

Delight in the Commandments

*I delight in your commandments, * which I have always loved.*

Psalm 119:47

Psalm 119 is actually my all-time favorite psalm. It is by far the longest of the psalms, coming in at a whopping 176 verses. What I love so much about it is that it focuses on the delight we find in following the commandments of God. The whole text is full of praise for the law of the Lord. In it we hear amazing (perhaps even shocking!) statements like "I long for your commandments...", "I will meditate on your commandments...", "Open my eyes, that I may see the wonders of your law...", "I delight in your commandments...", and "Truly, I love your commandments more than gold and precious stones." These verses may sound strange to our ears. In our day and age, we tend to think of commandments (or laws, or rules) as things to tolerate, not to rejoice in. Yet the Psalmist literally can't stop singing about how wonderful and blessed are the command-



There was a custom among the Jews in the ancient world that when they taught the law to their children they would give them a spoonful of honey. This way the children grew up associating the word of God, the Holy Scriptures, and his commandments, with sweetness in the mouth (alluded to in 119:103). Perhaps we ought to adapt this into our own practice!

Lent is a time to relearn what it means to be in love with God. We learn to love God (and we become better people, experience true freedom, etc.) when we allow him to have a say in the way we live our lives. So today perhaps we should ask ourselves: Do I delight in the commandments of God and the Church? Or do I merely tolerate them? How might I better conform my life and daily practices to the will of God? Use the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20), and the “Six Precepts of the Church” (Google it!) as your guide.

Almighty God, in your goodness you have shown us the way of truth, goodness, and beauty; with the aid of your grace, teach us to glory in your will and to delight in your commandments; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Fr. Joseph Francis
Curate

THURSDAY, MARCH 14TH

A Heavenly Symphony

*“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard.
Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”*

Psalm 19 ESV 1-4a

Rare is the moment that rivals the quiet contemplation of natural beauty for me. Or, should I say, “semi-quiet” contemplation, since I often ruin the quiet sense of awe by whispering a half audible, “wow”.

While perhaps not a central tenet of Christian doctrine, that glimpse of supernatural glory visible in creation feels like the genuine starting point of spirituality. The grandeur of the universe reminds us of the insignificance of humanity. Moreover, we are united in the human condition by our shared relationship to nature; a constant part of the human experience is the wonder of nature. There is no one who does not hear nature’s “voice” throughout “all the earth”. In his letter to the Romans, Paul says that the awe we experience in nature should be enough to point us to the existence of God and the corruption of mankind.



something that otherwise we would have no way to know: God's greatness. What is the origin of that simplest of concepts? Is it not our impression of nature? Does it not point to the grandeur of God? What else could possibly deserve such a word as "greatness"?

Lord, would you open my eyes to your glory? May I be aware to the greatness you have shown me. Would you guard me from trivial distractions that cause me to defile your glory? You have graciously instilled me with your glory, And now would you allow your Holy Spirit to enliven the image of you within me, that I may sing your praises in this world though I am silent. Amen.

Mack Cleveland
High School Senior

Psalms 19, 46, 50, 59, or 60 Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5 Hebrews 4:1-10 John 3:16-21

FRIDAY, MARCH 15TH

Connections

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

After working at my first job for four years, I accepted a transfer to the company's El Paso facility. The manager in El Paso was actually a North Texan from the small town of Nocona, northwest of Fort Worth, in Montague County. It turned out his mother who lived in Nocona was friends with my mother's aunt who lived in Bowie, also in Montague County. Even though this connection was pretty insignificant and he was quite a bit older than me, we started our relationship with something in common. We both knew something about living in that part of Texas. There was a very remote, but real shared experience. He was very helpful in getting me situated with a place to live in El Paso and smoothly transitioned into my new job. I always felt comfortable working with him while he remained El Paso. It was a helpful connection.

About 16 years later as I interviewed for a job in Fort Worth, the man who would be my manager, informed me that he had graduated from the same small college that I did. He was several years older than me but again we had something in common from the beginning. It was a bit of a shared experience. I'm pretty sure that this commonality played a significant part in his choosing to hire me. He frequently referred to that connection while I worked for him. I always



He resisted temptations; we often do not. It's fortunate for us however that our High Priest knows what it's like to be tempted. He has been in our shoes so he sympathizes with us in our weaknesses. We're not in this alone. It's good to have a connection, especially with God.

Lord Jesus, we are thankful that we may approach your throne of grace looking for mercy from a compassionate High Priest who shares common experiences with us. Our connection with you assures us of your love and care for us. Amen.

Tom McDaniel
Oblate, St. Benedict

Psalm 40, 51, 54, 95 Deuteronomy 10:12-22 Hebrews 4:11-16 John
3:22-36

SATURDAY, MARCH 16TH

Let Your Words Guide Us

"You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ..."

The reading from Deuteronomy asks us to keep God's word ever present in our hearts and souls and to share our love of his word with our children. As a church community, we instill God's teachings in our children's daily lives by sharing Biblical lessons, encouraging prayers at family dinners and gatherings, and Sunday school teachings to provide a moral compass.

As we near our oldest son beginning his journey to college, we pray that our teachings, and those he's heard in church, will guide him and that he remembers that as long as he follows God's word, as it is written in Verse 24, "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours" and in Verse 25, "No one shall be able to stand against you."

This year for Epiphany, we had our home blessed by Father Francis. We would encourage others to do this next year, as it was a rewarding experience to have the word written on the "doorposts of our house," (Verse 20), as a reminder that ours is a Christ-centered home.

Dear Lord, please let your word be proclaimed in our heart and soul, not only in our thoughts but in our purposeful actions, and help us demonstrate your unwavering



SUNDAY, MARCH 17TH

Saint Patrick's Breastplate, A Prayer of Protection

Patrick, "Apostle to Ireland" (389-461) was in fear for his life when he first prayed the Breastplate. Around the Hill of Tara, having preached to many and turned them to Christ and away from the pagan beliefs of the Druids, Patrick lit a bonfire on Easter Eve. It was also the time of a Druid Festival for which the pagan king Laeghaire had ordered every fire in the land put out in preparation. Patrick's light shone brightly, boldly. King Laeghaire was infuriated and so ordered Patrick brought before him. Patrick witnessed and preached to the king and his court to the effect no harm was done to him; however, filled with jealousy, Laeghaire plotted to have him killed later, as he left Tara. Patrick and his few companions knew they were in grave danger. It was in this circumstance that Patrick prayed the Breastplate, the opening of which can be found below. Then, perhaps with verse from Psalm 84 on his lips, Patrick set out toward safety.

*Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the Valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
each one appears before God in Zion.
O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob!
Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed! (Psalm 84:5-9)*

As the would-be murderers sent by Laeghaire waited, watching for Patrick and his companions to pass by, all they saw was a company of stags pass by. Patrick had been shielded!

*I bind unto myself today
the strong name of the Trinity
by invocation of the same,
the Three in One and One in Three.
I bind this day to me for ever,
by power of faith, Christ's Incarnation,
His baptism in the Jordan River;
His death on Cross for my salvation;
His bursting from the spiced tomb;
His riding up the heavenly way;
His coming at the day of doom;
I bind unto myself today. Amen.*

(C. F. Alexander, Trans., Celtic Daily



MONDAY, MARCH 18TH

Two Thoughts to Consider

"I must perform my vows to you, O God; I will render thank offerings to you. For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."

Psalm 56:12-13

"Thy vows are upon me, O God!—not upon me as a burden which I am loaded with, but as a badge which I glory in, as that by which I am known to be thy menial servant—not upon me as fetters that hamper; but upon me as a bridle that restrains me from what would be hurtful to me, and directs me in the way of my duty."

Matthew Henry

"I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

John 4:39-42

If you're like me: over the age of fifty and are a "Cradle-Episcopalian"; as you were growing up, you probably didn't have to go through the rigmarole of truly studying the Bible – that was what the Baptists did; Episcopalians didn't have to do it because we had the BCP. Except for an occasional prayer to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" (*whatever that meant*), I never considered Bible study to be beneficial to my spiritual maturity. *WHAT IDIOTSY!*

Fifteen years ago, as an effort to appease my wife, I enrolled in a non-denominational Bible study program, Bible Study Fellowship, and it changed my life. I discovered the comfort, peace, and joy that is in God's Word; and now realize what the Samaritans meant when they said: "*for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world*".

Thanks be to God for those who have come before us, who sowed the seed so that others may reap for their labors. I find a lot of insight in the writings of Matthew Henry, who wrote: "*We were induced to look into the scriptures by the saying of those who told us that in them they had found eternal life; but when we ourselves have found it in them too, have experienced the enlightening, convincing, regenerating, sanctifying, comforting, power of the word, now we believe, not for their saying, but because we have searched them ourselves: and our faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*"

Prayer: "*How lovely are the messengers that preach us the Gospel of Peace!*" Jacob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn

Mack Wood
Owner / Agent



TUESDAY, MARCH 19TH

St. Joseph's Day

The Obedience of Jesus

*Yours are the heavens; the earth also is yours; *you laid the foundations of the world and all that is in it.*

Psalm 89:11

And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart.
Luke 2:51

Today, we are presented with two juxtapositions. The first is the contrast between feasting and fasting. We are in the middle of Lent, and today, the church calls us to a great feast. Even in the midst of our repentance and preparation, we are given a break and told to celebrate the earthly father of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you have been observing your Lenten disciplines so far, today your curate gives you permission to feast. Make a cake... grill some steaks... open a bottle of wine... pray... and celebrate St. Joseph. The same is the case for the Feast of the Annunciation in a few days.

The second juxtaposition is the mystery of Jesus' obedience to his earthly parents. Jesus Christ is God. As the Psalm tells us, the heavens and the earth are his, and he laid the very foundations of the world. Yet, in the Gospel, we are told that the adolescent Jesus lived under the authority of his father and mother in Nazareth. What an incredible and fearful mystery! He who created everything, and is truly king of the universe, humbled himself to be obedient to St Mary, the Mother of God, and her Most Chaste Spouse, St. Joseph!

What might this mystery mean to us? First, it means that Blessed Mary and Joseph play an astonishing and important role in the history of our salvation. The Mother of God gave her flesh to the Son of God, nursed him at her breast, followed him during his ministry, and cared for him even until the moment of his death. St. Joseph, as head of the Holy Family, defended and cared for the Blessed Mother and their Divine Child. Thus, we give particular reverence and honor to these Saints who gave entirely of themselves for Jesus' sake. Second, it means that Mary and Joseph still play a role in our Christian life today. Just as Mary and Joseph cared for the body of Christ on earth, they continue to care and pray for his body the Church. United with Jesus in heaven, they continue to pray for us in the communion of saints. This is why Mary is affectionately given the title "Mother of the Church", and Joseph the title "Protector of the Church." Third, it means that we, too, are meant to be obedient to those justly in authority over us. As Jesus was obedient and loving to his parents, so are we to be obedient and loving to those who have authority. Of course, this is not always easy (especially for teenagers!), but it is important. In learning to be obedient to earthly authority, we learn to be obedient to our Father in Heaven.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH

Do You Want To Be Healed?

This story is from the Gospel of John and is about the crippled man who is at the pool of Bethesda for 28 years waiting to be healed. Every time the angel comes to stir the waters someone else gets in first and is healed. Jesus comes along and asks him, "Do you want to be healed?"

Think about this for a minute. Here is a man who has spent probably most of his life with a single intent "If I could only be healed, I could go on with my life." For 27 years he has persisted to no avail. This must have been so frustrating. Probably several times the angel had stirred the waters, and he was never the first one in, so it was never him. He wasted most of his life seeking his wish, rather than moving on and living the life he had.

Many times we, too, have waited patiently for things to happen, and it never seems to be us who are rewarded. It is so easy to become discouraged, as it must have been for him. "Will I ever get my break?" "Will it ever be my turn?" Everyone else always seems to get the blessing.

For the first time though, Jesus comes along with the questions, "Do you want to be healed?" What about us? The question may not be "Do you want to be healed?" but "What do you really want?" The crippled man showed faith and stated his need. Do we turn to Jesus in faith and rely on him to meet our needs? His answer may not always be "Yes." It may be "No" or even "Not yet." If it is no, there may be something far better for us than we could have been aware of that may be coming soon. We can be confident that if we are truly living and trusting in Jesus, the answer will always be what is best for us.

Lord Jesus, I thank you that you always know what is best for me. Help me to trust you to provide the right answers to my needs. I pray this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Robert A. Barcus

THURSDAY, MARCH 21ST

This is a familiar passage, Jesus' response after being criticized for healing on the sabbath. Jesus explains that to deny him, when he is only doing the Father's will, is to deny the Father! He goes on to explain that if we hear his words and believe in the Father, we will bypass judgment under the law because *we have already passed from death to life!*

As baseball season begins, one is reminded of the immortal words of Yogi Berra -



In theory, there is no difference between being saved by the law and being saved by faith. But in practice, there is only one hope for salvation - our faith in Jesus and the Father who sent him.

Dear Jesus, We believe in you. Send your Holy Spirit to help us to bear your word and to follow you. Help us in our unbelief so that we may be saved by your grace. Amen.

Cheryl and Dennis Emerick
Health care worker and Social Worker

Psalm 70, 71, or 74 Jeremiah 4:9-10, 19-28 Romans 2:12-24 John
5:1-29

FRIDAY, MARCH 22ND

“Oh come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.”

Psalm 95

During the Feast of Purim, when the name of Haman, the man who tried to exterminate the Jewish people in ancient Persia, is read, a loud noisemaker, a grogger, is spun to drown out the name of Haman. Haman is a symbol of evil.

How do you fight evil? If someone hurts you, you hurt them. If someone hates you, you hate them back. You become bitter over what they did. The thing is, you aren't overcoming the evil, but you are repeating it, echoing it.

The grogger, though, deals with the sound of evil by producing its own sound, a different sound that drowns out the evil. How can I do this? By producing an entirely different sound, a completely different spirit. You overcome evil by bringing forth its opposite.

You overcome despair by bringing forth hope. Overcome the negative by bringing forth the positive. Overcome the sound of darkness by drowning it out by the sound of light. Sing to the Lord and make a joyful noise. Even if all I can do is say, “Thank you, Jesus, for loving me,” it is a joyful noise that will drown out the evil.

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us the way out of the darkness, out of despair, depression, with songs and joyful noises to you. Help us to find our song to sing to you. Amen.

Michelle Briggs
Office Manager



SATURDAY, MARCH 23RD

An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love it so, but what will you do when the end comes?

Jeremiah 5:30-31

Judah's people, in their stubbornness, have closed their eyes and ears to the works of God. They have chosen to follow false prophets and teaching. Jeremiah is trying to warn them of their destruction. I am afraid that we do the same thing. It is so easy to listen to a preacher who teaches that if you give money or do x, y, and z, then God will give you a blessing or grant you your desire. The preacher is luring the people to do something in hope of gain. The preacher is twisting the grace and mercy of God. He is training the people falsely. Yet, it is so easy for me to fall into this. If I serve at the altar, sing in the choir, teach a class, etc., then I will sometimes think—well, surely God will honor this and make it easier for me in the end. I have become like Judah. I am no longer honoring God with my service, but myself. What do I gain really?

I think of Jesus' brothers. In John's Gospel 7:3-5, they say to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples may see the works you are doing. For no man works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." They were mocking him. They are focusing on his acts and what they think it gets him (his disciples' faith). They, too, miss the point.

But, St. Paul understands; in Romans 3:23-24 he writes "*... since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*"

I believe that I am going to Heaven because Jesus lovingly gave himself up for me. It is truly through God's grace and mercy that this will happen. I must remind myself of this over and over. It is not to show off or truly hope for gain that I serve my Lord Jesus Christ, but it is because I want to share what I have been given because it is so great. God is Good!

O Lord, when our blindness and sin block us from the grace you have so freely given, help us turn back to you. May your light and love shine through each of us, so that others may see what you have done and how much you have given, for you are wonderful. Amen.

Lenore Rothman
Lay Reader, Choir member



SUNDAY, MARCH 24TH

“The seas have lifted up, Oh Lord, the seas have lifted up their voice; the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.”

Psalm 92:3

When I read Psalm 92:3, I was reminded of sitting on the beach in San Diego a few years back watching and listening to the roaring breakers roll onto the shore. I started thinking about the praise the ocean lifted up to the Lord that day. The Bible tells us in Psalm 98:7-8 that the seas, rivers, mountains, and everything that lives within should sing for joy. That includes us!

It can be so difficult to praise God, especially during difficult times, but that’s exactly what we’re supposed to do. Still, how can we offer genuinely joyful praise during times when we don’t feel joy?

The first thing we can do is ask God to put joy in our hearts. I read an article online that said, “Time after time, I’ve seen God put forgiving love in me right where angry resentment had been half an hour before, simply because I asked him to.” Our God is faithful to answer our prayers and petitions. So I say to you, *“Ask, and what you ask for shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened to you.”* Luke 11:9

Another thing we can do is focus on thanking God for His blessings. If we turn our focus away from life’s distractions and difficulties meditating on what God has done and is doing in our lives, we’ll be hard-pressed not to feel the joy of the Lord in our hearts. *“Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.”* 1 Chronicles 16:8

Lastly, we shouldn’t miss church. During hard times, it’s really easy to pull away from worship and Christian fellowship. But those are the most important times to surround ourselves with fellow believers. Very often, if we’ll only show up, God will meet us right where we are and we’ll find joy through a hymn or the words of a sermon. *“I am safe, and among the worshipers I will praise the Lord.”* Psalm 26:12

So, as we turn our hearts to reverent prayers, fasting, and confession during this Lenten season, let us also strive to live with joy in our hearts, and just like those crashing waves, let us praise the Lord!

Heather Smith
New Member
Accountant



MONDAY, MARCH 25TH

Holy Day, The Annunciation The Word of God

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.... The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus...For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Luke 1:26-38

Mary, a young woman of no status, from the town of Nazareth, an utterly insignificant place is singled out, called, chosen, and overshadowed with the Spirit of God. Her response moves from one of fear to total trust in God's mysterious designs.

Mary has always been projected to the faithful, by the Church, as an example to be imitated, though not precisely in the type of life that she led or social background in which she lived. Rather, she is upheld as an example to the faithful for the way in which, in her own particular life, she fully, and responsibly, accepted the word of God and acted on it, and because charity and the spirit of service were the driving force of her actions. As Pope Paul VI stated, "She is worthy of imitation because she was the first and most perfect of Christ's disciples."

The angel Gabriel said to Mary, "You will conceive and bear a son...." He did not ask if she was willing to conceive and bear a son; she was not given a choice. That is how God's will comes to us; in the things that happen to us; more than in the things we choose!

Nothing is impossible to God! In difficult times, it is good to remember that God is fully in charge of our world. Everything happens according to his plan. There is always hope. Scripture leaves us in no doubt about God being a long-range planner. He can determine a whole series of events to come to maturity in his own good time. In fact, he has done this for the benefit of us all even before the beginning of the world, for us to become sisters and brothers of Christ.

Lord, may we grow each day in trusting in your amazing annunciation to each of us. Help us to not be afraid to do your will and walk in your ways as you instruct us to do. In the busyness of our lives, Lord, keep these thoughts before us. Like Mary, may we be ready to play our part in bringing you to Holy birth. Amen.

David Johnson, Sr. Warden
Sr. Strategic Sourcing Specialist,
Atmos Energy Corporation



TUESDAY, MARCH 26TH

Faith

From Psalm 78:1-4: *Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children but tell it to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might, and the wonders that he has done.* (A Maskil of Asaph)

From Jeremiah 23: *“Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.” But they did not obey or incline their ear, “but walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts and went backward and not forward.”*

From Romans 4:13: *For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.*

From John 7:37: *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, “Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”” Now this he said about the Spirit, who those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

Prayer 3 from *The Book of Common Prayer*

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Jean Hart

Daughter of the King

Cathedral Choir



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27TH

"...if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."
8:19

J o h n

Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet as he constantly lamented his people's sinfulness and deviation from God. In Jeremiah 9, he writes about the treachery among the people, the distrust and the self-centeredness of neighbors. Sound familiar? Today, we are still lamenting the seeming breakdown of society and may even despair for the future. A very glum outlook.

Then, Jesus speaks to us in the Book of John. He tells us "I am the Light of the world" and promises that those who follow him will have the "Light of life."

I find that whenever we take our eyes off Jesus, we lose hope, motivation, a sense of well-being; and the 'light' disappears. As people of faith, we have to constantly seek Jesus, spend time with him and get to know him even better. In general, when we have knowledge or information, we can share it to impact those around us thus shaping a better world. Jesus himself said, "if you knew Me, you would know My Father also" and I believe that if we know the Father, we can truly impact our world for the better.

Dear Lord, we thank you for your love personified in your son Jesus Christ. We ask that we always remember to keep the focus on you. Let your light shine through us to the world. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 28TH

Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me.

Psalms 42

The idea of deep calling unto deep stirs up thoughts of the wonder of profound communication with the Lord in any way He sees fit. He has countless avenues for doing so, including touching hearts with that still, small voice which we would always be wise to heed, guiding us via open or closed doors, having a pertinent verse cross our path repeatedly in a short span of time, and, of course, many more ways.

The repetition of the word "deep" is astonishing to me. It almost seems to imply that the Lord's depth and humanity's depth are equals. How ridiculous, but how gracious! His infinite depth and indescribable glory calls to my humble, simple, relative shallowness and self-centeredness that is as hard to release as a large sheet



Although we cannot reach the Lord strictly based on our own efforts, when we try our best to seek Him and to put Him first, He bridges the gap, just as He did when he came to seek and save the lost.

Mary Robitaille
Educator
Choir

FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH

"It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High."
Psalm 92:1

Hymn 390

1 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation! O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation! Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near, join me in glad adoration.

2 Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning; sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining! Have you not seen all that is needful has been sent by his gracious ordaining?

3 Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you; surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you. Ponder anew what the Almighty can do, if with his love he befriends you.

4 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him! All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him. Let the Amen sound from his people again; gladly forever adore him.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Psalm 95:1-3

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Hymn 376

Joyful, Joyful Lord, we adore Thee; God of glory, Lord of love
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee; Hail Thee as the sun above
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away
Giver of immortal gladness; Fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,



Thou art giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living, Ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, All who live in love are Thine;
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

In closing, let us remember: Romans 8:28 *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*

Dearest Lord and heavenly Father, I pray that each of us draw strength, courage and love from you as we face each day. Let us remember that you know our prayer and needs before we ask and that you answer in one of three ways. The answer is “yes” and you give us what we ask. The answer is “no” and you give us something better. The

SATURDAY, MARCH 30TH

His faithful Love Endures Forever

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good! Give thanks to the God of gods. Give thanks to the Lord of lords.

Psalm 136

He made the heavens so skillfully, placed the earth among the waters, made the heavenly lights, the sun, and the moon. He led us through the wilderness. He knows our weaknesses, saves us from enemies, gives food at a time of need. We give thanks to the God of heaven for his faithful love endures forever. The journey of life takes many avenues. I feel at times as a Pilgrim traveling to Jerusalem, crying out for help but only for what I want. I turn to the Lord for hope in the Word and unfailing love. As Overcomers, we are taught to follow in the Lord’s Word for eternal life. First step of an Overcomer is morning prayer and to grow in an unfailing love for the Lord. I find it difficult to begin the day with a morning prayer; however, I am constantly reminded of what the unknown author said:

*I got up early one morning
And rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I didn't have time to pray.
Problems just tumbled about me,
And heavier came each task;
“Why doesn't God help me?” I wondered.
He answered, “You didn't ask.”
I wanted to see joy and beauty*



*I tried to come into God's presence;
I used all my keys in the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
"My child, you didn't knock."
I woke up early this morning,
And paused before entering the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I had to take time to pray.*

Dear Lord, Thank you for giving me what I need instead of what I want. Help me to grow through struggles. Amen.

Wilma Mabrey

SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST

How is it that ye do not understand?

And he cautioned them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." And they discussed it with one another, saying, "We have no bread." And being aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"
Mark 8:13-21

Over the space of a few chapters in the Gospel according to Mark, Jesus has sent out the twelve by pairs on a mission, learned of the death of his kinsman John the Baptist, received back his disciples, miraculously fed the five thousand, dealt with the questions of the Pharisees, and traveled about healing the sick and teaching both Jews and Gentiles. At the beginning of this chapter, he has fed the four thousand in another miracle, and now the Pharisees confront him again. Miracles are not enough for them; they want a sign from God. Jesus knows that they're trying to test him, and he refuses to play their game. He takes the disciples and crosses the Sea of Galilee again.

On the way Jesus tells them to pay attention and beware of the "leaven (yeast) of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." That is, he uses a metaphor related to bread to make a point that he thinks the disciples will understand. He is not unreasonable to expect them to get what he's talking about: these disciples have been out on their own—teaching, healing, casting out devils. They are not highly



in his people, but also they have seen Jesus—on *two* separate occasions—feed thousands of people from just a few loaves and fishes. Nevertheless, their concentration on the wrong thing leads them to misunderstand Jesus. Just as the Pharisees concentrate on their rules more than justice, and Herod kills John the Baptist, whom he *admits* is a prophet, because he cares more for his reputation before his court than doing the right thing, the disciples fail to be the right kind of yeast to make the kingdom of God rise.

They are like us, aren't they? The disciples get so wound up in the cares of daily life that they don't recognize what God is telling them. They miss the point.

O Father, whose son Our Lord Jesus Christ is the true bread from Heaven, so lead us to attend to your word, and so listen in our hearts, that we may act in the world by your Spirit, and bring about your kingdom, as you have taught us. Amen.

Charles M. Gatlin, Jr. (Chuck)
Technical Editor & Former Professor

MONDAY, APRIL 1ST

Call to Study

“For behold, every one of you follows his stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to me.”
Jeremiah 16:10-21

We as children carry on the sins of our parents. We have learned many good things from them but we have internalized their neglectful distractions as well.

Across generations, we continue to be ignorantly caught up in a world of false idols. These idols are not those of ancient gods but of modern popular culture, social media, entertainment, etc. We do not recognize our misplaced priorities as sin. The Israelites in Jeremiah 16, were actually surprised to hear that God was displeased with them. We need to learn about God and His laws to recognize His will. Our sin weighs us down, each day a little more, to the point that we will feel the consequence of not following His will.

This passage tells the reader to reflect on what is important and what is trivial, that we should not take for granted what we have learned from our parents and the world around us. We need to sift through our inherited teachings and experiences to determine what is of God and what is not. Lent is a time of reflection and prayerful study. We should make time to study the Bible and hear God's voice. By doing so, we will be able to shed some of sin's weight.



“Oh Lord, my strength and my stronghold,” give us the patience and discipline to withdraw from our busy world to see the true path. Amen.

Steve Manson

Usher, Retired Vestry member and Vestry Clerk

Patricia Bracken

All Saints Chorale

TUESDAY, APRIL 2ND

A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. But he said to them, “It is I; don’t be afraid.”

John 6:16-27

John 6:16-27 is a powerful passage that teaches about faith, fear and the love that our Lord God has for us that he sent his only son Jesus Christ to be our savior. As a child, I was always fascinated about this passage, I would read it over and over in wonder as to how anyone could walk on water. I never understood the whole concept then because I was young and did not know the Lord like I do now.

Jesus is not just anyone. He is our savior, anchor and life guard. Whatever our circumstance, we should remember what Jesus said, “It is I; do not be afraid.” If Jesus can walk on water in the midst of a storm, he can walk with us in the midst of our overwhelming problems. This doesn’t mean that Jesus will always change our circumstances. It does mean that when we hold on to him with faith, and not fear, we will not sink into our worries and sorrows.

As Christians, we must remember that faith does not grow overnight, but it is a journey that we take daily by walking with Jesus, reading and reflecting on his word and putting our trust in only him as our savior.

Heavenly father, help us to remember to lean on you as our only savior and to walk with your son Jesus in faith. Teach us to seek for you presence at all times and to walk with you here on earth today so that we can walk with you on water tomorrow. Amen.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3RD

For His Name's Sake

I will walk with integrity of heart within my house. I will know nothing of evil.

Psalm 101:2, 4

But You, O God my Lord, deal on my behalf for Your Name's sake; because Your steadfast love is good, deliver me.

Psalm 109:21

There is security in knowing that I don't have to maintain a certain level of living, or convince God to help me, for Him to deliver me from troubles. It may be in a mess of my own making, still, as I trust in Him, He is faithful to hear my cry. David, throughout the Psalms, cried out to God telling Him of the attacks of enemies, but always proclaiming the faithfulness of God. Psalm 109:2: "Wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking with lying tongues and words of hate; they fought against me without cause. In return for my love and friendship, they accuse me, but I will give myself to prayer."

David does not rely on his own strength to deal with those that accuse him, but looks to the Lord. Psalm 109:21: "But You, O God my Lord, deal on my behalf for Your Name's sake; because Your steadfast love is good, deliver me." It is his dependence on God that draws deliverance.

It brings Glory to God when we trust in Him and don't try to work things out on our own. In Psalm 109:27, David prays, "Let them know that this is Your hand; You, O Lord, have done it." When we trust and people see God at work, it gives Him Glory and they can see that He is a good God. He wants the world to see Him in His Power and Glory so they too, will want a relationship with Him. Our security is in the character of God and not in our own abilities. God responds to our obedient listening. Very well known is the Twenty Third Psalm: "He leads me in paths of righteousness for His Name's Sake."

Dear Lord, help me remember to turn to You first and not only after trying my own way. Let me give myself to prayer and give praise to you as You show Yourself strong on my behalf. Let Your Glory be seen in our lives. Amen.



THURSDAY, APRIL 4TH

Our Obligation is to Live by the Spirit

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."

Romans 8:14

Our debt is to the Lord, not to the flesh. If we live according to the flesh, we will die. We are sometimes deceived into thinking that the flesh offers us life. Paul tells us that not only are we saved by the work of the Spirit, but we must walk by the Spirit if we want to grow and have holiness in the Lord.

Living in the Spirit means living as a child of God. The Holy Spirit leads us to repent, to think little of self, and much of Jesus. He leads us to love. We are children of God. Being a child of God means having an inheritance. God's help, through the Spirit, is available to us now.

The Spirit helps us when we are weak and do not know exactly how we should pray. God Himself, (through the Holy Spirit), helps us by making intercession for us. He has the ability to work all things for good and to see us through to the end. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28)

Dear Lord,

Help us to understand that if you are for us, no one can be against us. Despite any suffering we may face as Christians, if you are for us, what does it matter that others are against us? Help us to realize that one person, plus You, will make an



FRIDAY, APRIL 5TH

Sing for Joy

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord.

P s a l m

95

This Psalm is the first scripture that spoke to me in a personal way. Growing up, my family did not regularly attend church, although I would visit my friends' churches, occasionally. My sophomore year of high school, I joined a school singing ensemble which performed mostly worship music. As a member of Cantatrice, for the next three years I felt the presence of God with me through music. I believe my time with this group laid the foundation for my spiritual life going forward. I give thanks to God often that he put my choir director in my path at that time to fill my heart with songs of praise.

Dear Lord,

Thank you for the people that you put in our path who remind us to worship God every day. Help us to recognize those individuals who are sent to show us all the ways to worship you for you are the great God. Amen.

Tanya Webb

SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH

Can a human being work their way into heaven?

And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

John 6:65

Can a human being work their way into heaven? That is the question. These two readings from the lectionary, John 6:60-71 and Romans 9:10-18, clearly say that it is impossible to "earn" your way into heaven.

I am not a believer in predestination, but rather, a believer in free will. I believe we were made in the image of God, by God, and that part of the 'image' is His free will. God is free to love, or not love, His creation, and He chooses to steadfastly care for, nurture, and maintain (LOVE) His creation. We must be free to love or not love. If it were not so, why would Jesus command us to "Follow Him" as He set the example for all. He taught his disciples, cared for them, and finally laid down His life so they might have everlasting life. And not just them, but all of us. Jesus had a choice. So did Satan. So do we.



how each page is going to unfold even though the characters are moving forward (and sometimes backward) in random fashion is known by the author before it is written down. We are confined to time and as we turn each page, we are sometimes delighted, sometimes sad, sometimes motivated, and sometimes ambivalent or appalled. I feel certain that anyone looking on as we make our free will choices would have all these same emotions. I confess that I, at times, have these emotions right inside my choices, as I make them minute by minute.

I believe the point of these two readings is that God is the creator, and that we are the creation. We are totally dependent upon His saving Grace. We cannot work, or earn, our way into heaven. He even initiates our desire for Him by his calling us. If we hear the call, if we believe in God, we must study the Holy Scriptures, and with help from the Holy Spirit follow the example Jesus set for us.

Father in heaven, creator of the universe, creator, sustainer, and savior of mankind, creator of me, grant me a deeper relationship with You. Grant me also the will to subdue my ego and accept Your will and Your grace. Amen.

Phylecia and Steve Schooling

SUNDAY, APRIL 7TH

Deny yourself, take up the cross and follow me.

Certainly, 2018 was not one of the great years for the St. Vincent's family with the loss of many of our loved ones. The common adage 'when the going gets tough that the tough get going' makes sense in situations like these, when even after such short comings, the family can still smile, gather together for worship and even live their lives as if nothing really happened.

Today's gospel reading gives us a glimpse about true Christianity. Jesus never promised us bliss and being pampered just because we had become his followers. No, just the mere fact that we made that decision of following Christ makes us obvious devil's targets. Whereas, we are restless until we rest in God's embrace, similarly the devil is equally restless until he wins one of us among his kind.

That, therefore, means that Christians are constantly at battle. Isn't that what we enrolled to do when we offered ourselves (or our parents offered us) to be baptized? The 1928 Book of Common Prayer says that the day you are baptized, you enroll in Christ's army – yes, army; as a soldier – not to fight anything and everything about you but to fight the devil, the flesh and the world. These are the three aspects with which the devil confronted our Lord during the maiden times of his earthly ministry. The one who dared to sway our Lord, certainly takes us to be easier targets. A faithful, light-carrying baptized Christian should, therefore, constantly be at battle with the world, the devil and the flesh. Since we are always in battle, we must not only ^{Phylecia} ~~Phylecia~~ know our target, but should equally be equipped to face him (the Devil).



Therefore, Paul is right when he refers to our Christian walk as a form of boxing fight, always engaging the enemy. He adds too, that we must always exercise discipline and not appear as if we are beating the air.

During this Christian walk, as in most cases, we prevail under opposites. What the world ridicules as weakness, we celebrate as strength. What it rebuffs as outmoded, we proclaim as life giving. However, there are times when we have to be like them in order to win them for Christ. Being like them does not necessarily proscribe turning worldly, instead it implies appreciating their cultural and social traits; get along with them and eventually introduce them to Christ – something similar to what Paul did in Athens. Acting in opposites is what prompted Peter to instinctively appear to defend his master – a statement that earned him a rebuke from our Lord because by so doing he had turned into a stumbling block.

During this Lenten walk, we are reminded of the battle in which we enrolled. We engage in a critical self-examining exercise to correct those areas in our lives where we have lapsed – lest we gain the whole world and forfeit our souls (Mark 8.37). A well-lived Lenten observance will enlighten our paths to illumine those areas where spiritual filth has gathered. Put another way, Lenten observance must lead us to those closeted areas, remove the junk therein, so that a fresh breath of spiritual air may flow throughout the entire household – our bodies – which ultimately are also ‘temples of the Holy Spirit.’

Walk with us Lord Christ, walk with us that you who endured the cross for our salvation may teach us to focus on you and abandon those things which turn us away from you. Help us to live in this world as your gifts and endure all that the devil may present unto us for the sake of your

MONDAY, APRIL 8TH

Rescue Me from Myself, Oh Lord!

Psalm 31 speaks to me because I pray all the time for God to be my rock and fortress, not only against my enemies, but against myself. I don't know about you, but many times I feel I am my own worst enemy. I put myself down, I doubt myself, I wonder if I have hurt someone with my words, etc. Verses 8-10 say, “Have pity on me, O Lord, because I am in distress. My eyes, my soul, and my body waste away from grief. My life is exhausted from sorrow, my years from groaning.” When these thoughts begin to plague me, I pray for God to be my rock and fortress.



Psalm 31:1-5 gives us direction. “I have taken refuge in you, O Lord. Never let me be put to shame. Save me because of your righteousness. Turn your ear toward me. Rescue me quickly. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me. Indeed, you are my rock and my fortress. For the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.”

God is there for you! Don't let Satan steal your joy and put negative thoughts in your minds. You are a child of God, and He does not want us depressed and stressed. Pray to Him and praise Him! He is your rock and fortress.

Dear Lord,

Save me from myself and my self-defeating thoughts. Lift me up and show me I am your child and worthy of your love. Protect me from negative thoughts and lift me out of despair. Guide me and show me positive words and scriptures to lift me up and be the person you made me to be. Show me how to put my negative thoughts behind me so I can reach out and bless others. You are my rock and fortress and I rejoice in your presence. I praise your name! In Jesus precious name I pray. Amen.

Laurie Connely

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

TUESDAY, APRIL 9TH

God's Plan for Salvation

“Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.”

Romans 10:1-

13

In this passage, Paul writes of his desire for his fellow Jews to be saved. It is clear that they have taken the words of the law of Moses and tried to observe the law outwardly, but not in their hearts.

Paul writes that one must “confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, to be saved.” Paul, then, emphasizes that the message of salvation is universal. “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all.”

I find it amazing how the Lord works! He came to re-establish his relationship to the human race, first to Abraham, then the Mosaic Law, and finally, through Jesus Christ!

Dear Lord, thank you that from the beginning you planned our salvation. You planned to re-establish relationship to your creation. That Christ, both human and divine, died for our sins, then rose...conquering death. Praise be to God! Amen.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10TH

Jesus is the Door

Most certainly, I tell you, I am the sheep's door. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn't listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters in by me, he will be saved, and will go in and go out, and will find pasture. The thief only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.

John 10:7-10

I love this scripture which contains a warning regarding false teachings, as well as the assurance that Christ is the doorway through which we will have an abundant and eternal life. I am constantly amazed by all the treasures the Bible holds.

Many smaller villages did not have doors to keep the sheep in, they had merely an opening. The shepherd made his bed in the opening – blocking the opening with his body – protecting the sheep with his life. No sheep could leave except through him. No evil could enter except through him. The sheep knew their shepherd's voice and followed him willingly. I am led to the tomb when Mary Magdalene did not recognize Jesus until he called her name. Christ is a good shepherd.

He uses “I am” the door in direct reference to Christ and the direction that, through faith in Christ, we are allowed to enter the fold (to have covenant and communion with God). And as true believers, we are at home in Christ. Therefore, when we go out, we are not shut out as strangers but have liberty to come in again.

Deceivers of Christ, who steal hearts and affections from Christ, die spiritually with God and destroy their eternal soul. The devil works especially hard to bring us down. Christ came that we might have life; that we might be justified, sanctified and glorified through Christ our Lord and Savior. Christ came to give life – something better, life with advantage; that in Christ we not only live, but live an eternal life with abundant, happy hearts.

I love you Father God. Thank you, Father, for all the wonderful works you have performed in my life. You are a good shepherd and protector of your flock. Give me the heart of a disciple, Oh God, that I might follow you more closely. Direct my path when I go out to do your work. And when I am away, that I keep you in my heart. Guard my soul against false teachings and deceivers. Allow me to hear your voice when I am called and have a steadfast faith knowing you are always with me. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Pamela Campbell



THURSDAY, APRIL 11TH

Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

Psalm 141:2

The readings for today are similar to turning on the evening news...noisy, tales of woe.

Psalms 131, 132 and 140 list the troubles being loaded on David. He asks God to deliver him from the evil doers, from violence and from all the hard times he has been enduring.

In Jeremiah 26, the prophet Jeremiah has things that God instructs him to say to the leaders of the temple in Judah, and they are not happy to hear about it. Change your evil ways. There is still time.

In Romans 11, Paul writes to the Israelites about their turning their backs away from the laws of God.

John 10:19-42 is where Jesus had been confronted by the Pharisees about his healing the blind man on the Sabbath. Then, at the temple, he was questioned by the Jews about being the Messiah. Jesus said "I have told you, and you do not believe" and "because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me." Jesus is accused of blasphemy and they are ready to stone him when he said "I am God's Son. If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

In starting to read Psalm 141, the words remind me of a song from "Come Celebrate", a book of songs to supplement the 1982 Hymnal. *Let our praise to you be as incense; let our praise to you be as pillars of your throne. Let our praise to you be as incense as we come before you and worship you alone. As we see you in your splendor, as we gaze upon your majesty, as we join the host of angels and proclaim together your holiness.*

Dear God, Help us to turn off the distractions and noise of this world and tune into you with gentle sounds of praise and thanksgiving. Amen.

Susan Frey
Secretary

Psalm 131, 132, 140, 142 Jeremiah 26:1-16 Romans 11:1-12 John 10:19-42



FRIDAY, APRIL 12TH

God's Gift to Us and How We Use It

In Romans 11, one of the points God is making is about salvation. In verse 6, Paul tells us that that we cannot work our way into heaven, that it is a free gift. Our job is to reach out and take what God has to offer us. God loves everyone and wants us all to love Him, but it takes us reaching out to Him, then, He will open our eyes and ears to understanding. He is the source of our understanding. If, however, we choose not to follow Him, He will close our ears and eyes to His understanding.

We discussed that God gave us so much, but in return we have to give Him our love and praises. We need to continue to immerse ourselves in His word and commune with Him daily. We talked about Jesus being the root of the tree of life and we are the branches. Since the root that defines the tree is Christ, then the tree is Christian. If the root would be an apple tree for example, the tree would be an apple tree and its fruit apples. In that we are a Christ tree, our fruit needs to be Christ-like. So, what does that look like?

It means, we are all the same in God's eye. He made us different colors, gave us different gifts, put us in different families and life situations. He gave us grace and salvation. No matter how He made us on the outside, we all have grace and salvation. God is our source; we turn to Him for guidance, knowledge and strength. Since we are the branches of God's tree, we have all the riches. We need to remember that no matter whom we are or what our circumstances, we are God's own and we need to continually commune with Him to bear His fruit.

Our youth are bearing fruit and planting seeds in others. At school, in activities and at home, St. Vincent's youth are spreading God's word and love. We have many students who invite their friends to youth group on Wednesdays to see God working and to bask in God's love for a few hours each week. They in turn, spread that love and knowledge to others. The youth are not boastful or brag that they are Christians, but go about their lives with a confidence in who they are in Christ and others see that.

Dear Lord,

Help remind us that you and you alone are the root of our tree. Help us to grow in strength and power to bear your fruit. Have us not look on others as being different, but the same. Help us to realize our individualities are what make our tree balanced and strong, but the source is the same. Help remind us to be confident and strong in who we are, but not boastful. Help us to continue to share your Word and life to those we see. In Jesus precious name we pray. Amen.



SATURDAY, APRIL 13TH

Put Your Hope in God

Why are you downcast, oh my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise Him, my savior and my God.
Psalm 42:5

With the condition of the nation and world today, it is so easy to be “disturbed in our souls.” It sometimes feels like society is disintegrating before our very eyes. Feelings of hopelessness, depression and discouragement are not uncommon. Some people look to our secular society to find the solutions to their problems. David speaks in Ps. 42 and 43 of being persecuted by his enemies, not only from without, but from within himself. We may often struggle with, and despair about, things we cannot control. David said, “hope in God.”

Jesus addressed the perspective of society in the reading from John. The people would not accept Him, or his miracles, because they were more concerned about the approval of men, than God. Jesus told them, “When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.” (John 12:44) Jesus was trying to get them to see that He was their only hope and salvation. Yet, they rejected Him for the approval of men.

Perhaps the biggest challenge we have in maintaining our faith is dealing with the continued assaults on our faith from the “world”. We are called to live “in” the world, but not be “of” the world. We have to continuously praise our Lord and Savior and seek His comfort and mercy.

Lord, you are our strength and salvation. Give us the strength every day to withstand the assaults of the enemy and remain faithful to you. Amen.

Larry and Linda Jones

ATC Instructor/Homemaker/Kairos Prison Ministry

Psalm 42, 43, 137:1-9, 144

Jeremiah 31:27-34

Romans 11:25

-36

John 11:28-44 or 12:37-50



APRIL 14TH PALM SUNDAY

The Cleansing of the Temple

Mathew

21:12-15

On Sunday morning of Passion Week, Jesus was cheered by throngs of admirers as He rode a donkey into the Holy City. The crowd welcomed Him as the Son of David, their long-awaited King. Hosanna! No doubt, they were expecting immediate action from the Lord's Champion. Now the Romans would be driven out of the Land of Promise and the Davidic Kingdom restored!

Yet, Jesus never raised a finger against the Roman occupiers. Instead, He went directly to the temple. Jesus, filled with divine wrath against impiety, sin and injustice, flipped the tables of the moneychangers and loosed the sacrificial beasts being sold in the temple court. "It is written," Christ shouted, "My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you make it den of robbers!" (Matt 21:13) The people had expected a political and military Son of David to restore his ancestor's earthly kingdom. What they got was the Son of the Living God, zealous for His Father's house. The people longed for a purging fire. They received a flaming tornado of Righteousness, dedicated to consuming all that is not holy, all that is not pure from the human heart.

As we near the end of our Lenten observance, may God give eyes to behold what still remains to be cleansed from our hearts in order to make them a fit habitation for the Spirit of God. And may our Savior Jesus Christ drive far from us all snares of the Enemy, for He alone can purge us from our sin. Amen.

Rev. R. W. Foster

Priest-in-Charge, St. Michael's Anglican Church-ACNA, Richland Hills, Texas

Psalms 24, 29, 103

Zechariah 9:9-12, 12:9-11, 13:1-9

1 Timothy

6:12-16

Matthew 21:12-17



APRIL 15TH MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Broken

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Psalm 51:1-2

On a shelf in her closet, my mother keeps a little porcelain egg adorned with delicate flowers and a butterfly that contains a fragrant purple candle. If you look closely, you will notice several cracks and a chip or two on the lid. Anyone else would view it as an old, broken egg that should have been thrown out a long time ago, but to her it means so much more. Over 40 years ago, my mom took me into a gift shop with her, and a little boy broke that little egg. That little boy was me. Even though it was an innocent accident by a very young child, and even though we didn't have the money to spend on such accidents back then, Mom still had to buy it. So she wiped away my tears, paid for it, and instead of throwing it away, she carefully glued it back together and has kept it all this time. For years its home was her dresser, and I think I remember a period of time when it stayed on her nightstand, but she has always kept it close. To my mom, it is a precious keepsake from that day long ago. And to me it is a reminder of how much she loves me. Mom was there, like she always was (and still is), to take care of it all - not just the broken egg, but also the little broken heart.

In some ways, this story reminds me of our Father's love for his children. Much like the egg, we are broken - every single one of us; we are sinful by nature, and there is nothing in our power that *we* can do to change this. God is well aware of our brokenness, and while we are completely undeserving, He loves us still and continues to take care of us. Let us come before Him with broken and contrite hearts (for how can we truly be repentant if we are not crushed by the consciousness of our guilt?). With loving hands, He mends our broken hearts and wipes away our tears. We are precious to Him because we are His children, and His love is unfailing.

A couple of years ago, my mom gave my wife a gift. Mary opened it and inside there was the exact same porcelain egg - a keepsake for my wife - but this one was unbroken. It only took forty years, but Mom had found an identical egg - a substitute that in a way made the original whole again. God's greatest gift to us is our Substitute, the Lamb of God. By the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, our sins are paid for, and we are made clean - we are made whole again.

Dear Heavenly Father, let us come before You with broken and contrite hearts, humbly asking for Your mercy and forgiveness. Thank you for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who You sent into the world to become the final and complete sacrifice for our



APRIL 16TH TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Awaiting a Savior

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”
Philippians 3:15-21

Recently, in our Senior High Sunday School Class, we were talking about the waiting periods that we all experience in our lives and how God can use the waiting periods to bring us closer to Him. We also differentiated between waiting on good things that we hope for and waiting on the promises of God. So often, the things we are waiting for are good things that we desire with great intensity because of how they will impact us personally (a relationship, a child, a healing, a job), but they are not promised to us by God.

What a relief that the really big things, the things of eternity, are promised to us by God. We may be waiting for their fulfillment, but we don't have to wait with uncertainty. With God's promises, our waiting changes to awaiting. To await something means we can expect that thing, we can look for it, in fact, it is imminent.

In the verse above, we are reminded that “our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” This verse calls us to look beyond our hopes and aspirations in this life, to see that we are already citizens of heaven through Christ. The power of Him who spoke all into existence promises to “transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.” Through Christ we are reconciled with God and promised a life that will one day be free of sin and pain and disappointments. Our challenge is to live now in full confidence that we are already citizens of heaven and that it is just a matter of time before Christ comes again.

Heavenly Father, Thank you for your beautiful plan of Salvation. Thank you for loving us and making a way for us to be reconciled with you. Help us to live as citizens of heaven, that we may glorify You, trust You more fully, and share Your Good News to those around us. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Keal Cleveland
wife and mother

Psalms 6, 12, 94
-26

Jeremiah 15:10-21

Philippians 3:15-21

John 12:20



APRIL 17TH
WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

The Godless Man is Like a Fruitless Desert Plant

This is what the Lord says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. “But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Jeremiah 17:5-10, 14-17:5

We must place our trust in the Lord, as we cannot save ourselves. This is hard medicine to take. In this world, we benefit from hard work and a strong arm is an asset. Unfortunately, that strength will always fade and ultimately fail. Our friends cannot save us, and we are not strong enough to save ourselves. Only God is strong enough, wise enough, and always on our side.

My inner fifth grader says “OK... I’ll take the Trust in God path, but I’ll still work hard to build up my bank account.” Jeremiah obviously expected that people would attempt to have it both ways.

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? “I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”

We can deceive other people, we can even deceive ourselves, but not God. This isn’t filling out a tax form, and hoping that we won’t get caught. You can’t limit what God sees or considers.

Dear Lord, help me to embrace a true commitment to you and your service. As Jeremiah wrote, “heal me, Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise.” Amen.

Bob Thornton
 IT Analyst
 Lay Minister

Psalm 55 or 74

Jeremiah 17:5-10, 14-17

Philippians 4:1-13

John 12:27

-36



APRIL 18TH

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come before you; hide not your face from me in the day of my trouble. Incline you ear to me; when I call, make haste to answer me.
Psalm 102:1-2

The psalms are such a great source of calm and reassurance. There is always, somewhere hidden in the psalm that speaks to our human condition: whether it be in time of great joy as in Psalm 150, “Let everything that has breathe praise the Lord”; in time of trouble, Psalm 22, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”; or even in time of death, as that wonderful Psalm 23 reminds us, that though we “walk through the valley of death, we will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff comfort me.”

On this day of Holy Week, the Maundy Thursday, one of the Psalms appointed is Psalm 102. It would seem that this has a universal appeal. I think that we have all found ourselves in a similar situation. Crying to the Lord to hear our prayer. Asking God for direction and purpose and help us in our time or our day of trouble. And come quickly to help us. Do not tarry. Answer my prayer, NOW!

But, we find that the Psalmist reminds us that God never changes. We may change, even our prayers may change but God is steadfast and always there to help us. It is a matter trusting in the Lord. As Jesus washed the disciple feet on this night, so may we also help and comfort other knowing that the Lord is steadfast. His love endures forever and He will answer our prayers. All we have to do is ask.

Collect for Maundy Thursday:

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Deacon Kerwin Wade

Psalm 102, 142, 143

Jeremiah 20:7-11

1 Corinthians 10:14-17,

11:27-32 John 17:1-11, 12-26



APRIL 19TH GOOD FRIDAY

The Price

It is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
1 Peter 1:16-19

Now, we are come to the most solemn moment of Holy Week. As we contemplate the betrayal, the agony, and the suffering, we see that this is the reason for the Incarnation, the baptism in the Jordan, the healing, the teaching, the raising of Lazarus, and this, the example of the greatest love.

How do we put a price on our lives? Insurance companies will refer to tables of statistics. Juries and judges will try to come up with a fair legal punishment for the taking of a life. Civilizations and political ideologies in the history of the world have given answers ranging from worthless to priceless. Pilate took a payment of thirty pieces of silver. In this passage, Peter writes that a ransom was paid not with silver or gold but through sacrifice along the lines of the Old Testament attempts at atonement through the substitutional sacrifice of perfect and expensive livestock. Now we see the see the sacrifice of the most perfect Man, Emmanuel – God with us Himself. Peter points out that to accept the sacrifice of Jesus we must show our gratitude through our deeds and our conduct. This is not just a price. This demands the commitment of everything we can be – not just good, but absolutely holy.

I am reminded of the hymn by Isaac Watts, "When I survey the wondrous cross":

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Holy Jesus, we can never be thankful enough for your sacrifice and for your call to us. You alone are the Holy One who could make a difference. Help us to be holy as you are holy and to live lives that are acceptable to you, and the Father and the Holy Ghost, glorified for ever. Amen.

Robert Boyer
Choir



APRIL 20TH HOLY SATURDAY

This day is called Holy Saturday in remembrance of the Jewish history of keeping their Sabbath holy and resting as God did on the seventh day of creation. For Christians, this day is a day of preparation for the joy of the risen Lord. The scriptures assigned today discuss the division of the faithful and those who may not enter into “God’s rest” after the death of our bodies.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
Romans 8:5

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and of spirit, of joints, and of marrow, and discerning the t h o u g h t a n d i n t e n t i o n s o f t h e h e a r t .
Hebrews 4:12

Most of us have no real idea of where the line between the flesh and the Spirit is drawn by God with the sword. I was blessed to have the line drawn for me one year as I was teaching. I was having a rough year with a new principal who had a completely new set of ideas for teaching and relating to parents. Three days before an Open House, she handed me a typed speech I was to give at the Open House that intentionally misled and lied to the parents about their children. I was completely uneasy and upset because I had never lied to parents. Later after much thought, I went to one of the Vice Principals. This lady was known as a strong church-going Christian that most teachers respected and admired. I told her that I did not think I could give this speech to the parents because of the lies and misleading statements. Her advice was to give the speech exactly as was written because this speech was “just a job” and “it didn’t matter.” I asked her the question, “What about my soul?” I did not present the lies to the parents.

There is a clear line drawn by the word of God with his two-edged sword between the flesh and the Spirit. As you attend services for Easter Day, do not think about how much time you need after church for preparing a holiday meal, or hiding Easter Eggs, or other things of the flesh. Live in the Spirit of Life that was also given to Christ by God. Rejoice!!!

Dear Lord, thank you for the gift of Spirit in our lives. We pray that you help us to keep focusing on that important part of our lives. Thank you for raising Christ Jesus from the dead, and, through him, allowing us to also be saved from our sins. Amen.

Marilyn Keith
Retired Teacher

Psalms 27, 88 or 95

Job 19: 21-27a

Hebrews 4:1-16

Romans 8:1-



APRIL 21ST EASTER SUNDAY

Everyone thought it was over. It appeared that the greatest rabbi ever, the miracle worker of miracle workers was dead by means of a violent bloody Roman cross. There was no coming back. His executioners made sure of that. Even his faithful mother held his lifeless body at the foot of the cross and wept. Everyone thought it was over.

His broken body was wrapped in burial clothes and placed in a tomb on Friday afternoon. A giant stone was rolled across the entrance. Guards stood watch lest anyone try to steal the body. The soul of Jesus descended into the dead and his lifeless body lay cold on a stone slab cut out in the cave wall. Everyone thought it was over. His disciples grieved. His friends grieved. His family grieved. The religious authorities rejoiced. And Satan threw a big party to celebrate the death of the Son of God. It was over. Finished.

What most forgot was one simple teaching that Jesus said over and over again. With God nothing is impossible.

The Incarnation took place with the cross in sight. Jesus was born so that he might die and we might live. He paid the price of our sins on the cross and utters those famous words, "it is finished." The work of salvation had been completed. But what seems to be just a tragic story of love doesn't end there. For with God, nothing is impossible.

Early Sunday morning, in a fraction of a second, light filled that tomb. The same creative Word of God who said let there be light at the beginning of the universe, now says, let there be life. And Jesus rises from the dead. In a perfect resurrected body, Jesus steps out of the tomb and history will never be the same.

The angel greets the women on the way to the tomb. They expected to find a cold, dead body that needed anointing for burial. Instead they hear the words "be not afraid. He is risen." We now have the opportunity to embrace the eternal life that Jesus has won for us. He has conquered death and led humanity into the very heart of God.

Those three words "he is risen" is the most important message we could receive. It is also the most important message we could ever share.

To close, St. Paul writes in Romans 10:9, "if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Happy Easter. Rejoice for He is alive.

The Very Reverend Ryan S. Reed
Dean



LENTEN SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Stations of the Cross & Sermons

Wednesdays at 6:00pm

The Nursery will be available.

St. Mary and Her Son's Passion

3/13	Fr. Mark Polley	Mary and the Trial of Jesus
3/20	Fr. Christopher Cantrell	Mary and the Scourging of Jesus
3/27	Fr. Thomas Hightower	Mary and the Way of the Cross
4/3	Fr. Sam Wilgus	Mary at the Foot of the Cross
4/10	Bishop Iker	Jesus in the Arms of Mary (Pietà)

Light Lenten Meals at 6:45pm

Ministry		Meal
3/13	Youth Group	Meatless Spaghetti
3/20	Choir	Mexican Bean Chalupas
3/27	Vestry	Soup, salad and bread
4/3	Women's Group	Quiche, salad and bread
4/10	D.O.K.	Meatless Mexican Casserole and salad



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Holy Week Services

The Nursery is available for all services during Holy Week.

Date	Service
Sunday, April 14 7:30a.m. 9:00a.m. 11:15a.m. 6:00p.m.	Palm Sunday Holy Eucharist with Procession of the Palms (meet in courtyard) Choral Eucharist with Procession of the Palms (meet in parking lot by library) Choral Eucharist with Procession of the Palms (meet in parking lot by library) Seder Meal
Monday, April 15 6:00p.m. 7:00p.m.	Confession Holy Eucharist in St. Mary's Chapel
Tuesday, April 16 10:30a.m. 6:00p.m. 7:00p.m.	Mass of Collegiality Confession in St. Mary's Chapel Holy Eucharist
Wednesday , April 17 6:00p.m. 7:00p.m.	Confession in St. Mary's Chapel Holy Eucharist
Thursday, April 18 7:30p.m. 9:00p.m. - 12:00p.m. Fri- day	Maundy Thursday Liturgy Washing of the Feet The Watch in the Chapel (Sign Up Sheet in the Narthex)
Friday, April 19 7:30p.m.	Good Friday Liturgy
Holy Saturday, April 20 9:00a.m. Sunset (approx. 8:00 p.m.)	Holy Saturday Liturgy Easter Vigil Liturgy The Right Rev. Jack L. Iker, Preacher & Celebrant
Easter Sunday, April 21 7:30a.m. 9:00a.m. 11:15a.m.	Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist Choral Eucharist Choral Eucharist



ST. VINCENT'S CATHEDRAL

1300 Forest Ridge Drive
Bedford, Texas 76022
Phone 817-354-7911

The Right Rev. Jack Leo Iker – Bishop
The Very Rev. Ryan S. Reed – Dean of the Cathedral
The Rev. Richard A. Cantrell – Assistant
The Rev. John S. Kalimi – Assistant
The Rev. Joseph D. Francis - Curate
The Rev. Kerwin K. Wade – Deacon
Alissa Davis – Music Director & Organist
Laurie Connely – Coordinator of Youth & Children's Ministry

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