

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT



Prayer for Increased Faith

Lord our God,
because Abraham acted in faith
and obedience
you blessed him abundantly
with descendants as countless as the
stars of the sky
and the sands of the seashore.
Stir our faith in you,
so that we will not shirk
when obedience to your call is difficult.

May we be transformed through faith,
and be willing to acclaim your glory
and majesty,
even when we suffer trials and it seems
you are putting us to the test.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, March 1, 2015

Sharing in Christ's Passion and Death

Today's Readings: Genesis 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18; Psalm 116:10, 15, 16–17, 18–19 (116:9); Romans 8:31b–34; Mark 9:2–10. We see in the reading from Genesis that Abraham is directed to offer Isaac as a holocaust, but as he is about to slaughter his son, an angel stops him. God is pleased that Abraham trusts in the Lord enough that he would put to death his only son. God's love is such that he does not demand that Abraham make such a sacrifice.

In the Second Reading, we hear again of God's love and of trust in that love. Paul tells the Romans, "If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?" Paul relates the trustworthiness of God, who sacrificed his Son for us. Why would we not trust the

one who gave so much for us? Are you acquainted with anyone who is more worthy of your trust?

The reaction of Apostles Peter, James, and John to the Transfiguration is similar to how we respond to great events in our lives. They have seen a vision of Elijah, who represents the prophets; of Moses, who represents the Law; and Jesus, who is the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets. In awe of this vision, they want to build tents and stay on the mountain. We, too, desire to stay with our mountaintop experiences. However, we need to move on and tend to our responsibilities in our work and family lives. But it is in those places that we can ponder the dying and the risings throughout our life.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 2, 2015

Mercy and Forgiveness

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” Again in today’s Gospel we see that we are to act as God acts. We are not to show the kind of mercy that a secular judge would. Our model is the One to whom the reading from Daniel acclaims “mercy and forgiveness” belong. Make a mental note this week whenever you are inclined to judge another. Remind yourself of this Gospel passage and seek to dispel the judgment. As you continue this practice, you may find yourself becoming more merciful. Today’s Readings: Daniel 9:4b–10; Psalm 79:8, 9, 11 and 13 (103:10a); Luke 6:36–38.

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin

Katharine Drexel (1858–1955), the patroness of racial justice, was brought up in an upper-class family that opened their home to the poor. As a young woman interested in the needs of Native Americans, she was encouraged by her bishop and Pope Leo XIII to form a missionary order of nuns. The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament established twelve schools for Native Americans and fifty for African Americans, among them the teachers’ college that became Xavier University of Louisiana. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 1:10, 16–20; Psalm 50:8–9, 16bc–17, 21 and 23 (23b); Matthew 23:1–12.

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

St. Casimir

St. Casimir (1458–1483) is the patron of Poland and Lithuania. This son of the king of Poland was called “the Peacemaker” and “Defender of the Poor” during his young life. Uninterested in life as a prince, he lived modestly, devoting much of his day to prayer. He gave away much of his wealth to the poor and also interceded on their behalf with his father. Casimir seemed to understand the phrase in today’s Gospel, “whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant.” Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 18:18–20; Psalm 31:5–6, 14, 15–16 (17b); Matthew 20:17–28.

Thursday, March 5, 2015

Dependence on God

Upon hearing the story of Lazarus and the rich man that Jesus tells in today’s Gospel, we might initially think that the main focus is on compassion for the poor. While that is part of the story, there is more to it. The rich man has ignored the beggar’s cries, but he also has ignored God until he is left suffering in hell. Had the rich man depended on God while alive, he would have paid attention to the poor man. How does your life suffer when you refuse to bring God into it? Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 17:5–10; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4 and 6 (40:5a); Luke 16:19–31.

Friday, March 6, 2015

Coworkers in the Vineyard

In today’s parable, we may be overwhelmed that the wicked tenants killed the servants and then the landowner’s son; however, this parable is about more than murderous tenants. As disciples, we have been called to labor in the Lord’s vineyard. As the 2005 US bishops’ document states, “The Risen Lord calls everyone to labor in his vineyard, that is, in a world that must be transformed in view of the final coming of the Reign of God” (p. 1). Each of us must be mindful to do God’s work in the world. Today’s Readings: Genesis 37:3–4, 12–13a, 17b–28a; Psalm 105:16–17, 18–19, 20–21 (5a); Matthew 21:33–43, 45–46.

Saturday, March 7, 2015

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs

Perpetua, a mother of an infant son and chronicler of the persecution of Christians, and Felicity, a slave woman and expectant mother, were both killed by beasts in a public arena with a crowd watching. These holy women, who died around the year 203, heeded the Lord’s call and stood firm in the faith. That they would be killed for their faith did not deter their resolve to live as Christians. What challenges do you face as a Christian? Today’s Readings: Micah 7:14–15, 18–20; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 9–10, 11–12 (8a); Luke 15:1–3, 11–32.



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Keeping the Seasons

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