



## WEEK 1: MARCH 2– 8, 2022

### day 1 – “happy new year” (ash wednesday)

#### READINGS:

JOEL 2:12-18 | PSALM 51 | 2COR 5:20-6:2 | MT 6:1-6, 16-18

#### REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Return to me with your whole heart.” (JOEL 2:12)

#### OVERVIEW:

It might seem a little strange to think about the beginning of Lent the same as a New Year celebration. However, when you really think about the way we use each new year as a chance to reset who we are, where we’ve been, and layout our new goals, that is what Lent allows us to do in our faith. We must stop holding back and work to surrender all of ourselves over to God in this season. God wants the good and the bad... your whole heart. Let this Ash Wednesday be your spiritual new year, not because it’s a date on the church calendar, but so that you can be made new coming out on the other side transformed by God’s love.

#### ACTION:

Start of this Lent by making a list of ways you need to grow in relationship with Christ and give Him parts of your life you haven’t before. Make a plan of the ways you will grow and change this Lent.

#### REFERENCE:

“Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God's own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God”

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1691)*

### day 2 – “hope”

#### READINGS:

DT 30:15-20 | PSALM 1 | LK 9:22-25

#### REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.” (PSALM 40:5)

#### OVERVIEW:

One word that seems to be getting lost in our society is “HOPE.” People have become so accustomed to living in the moment, immersed in technology; they stop looking at the world around them to see the beauty. It also prevents them from looking past the struggles they are experiencing to understand there is hope for their future.



Together we must make an active effort to trust in God's plan and allow it to be revealed in God's time. Lent is a season of hope because of every way it calls us to empty ourselves and ends with the death of Christ. It is the process that gives us something beautiful in the end, knowing there is an Easter Sunday despite current darkness. Surrender to hope while sharing its power with all those closest to you.

### **ACTION:**

Think of the people in your life that help give you the greatest example of hope. Pray to their patron saint, and yours, for their intercession to allow Christ's hope for you to be revealed in your struggles.

### **REFERENCE:**

"The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man; it takes up the hopes that inspire men's activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of heaven; it keeps man from discouragement; it sustains him during times of abandonment; it opens up his heart in expectation of eternal beatitude. Buoyed up by hope, he is preserved from selfishness and led to the happiness that flows from charity.

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1818)*

## day 3 – "mind your business"

### **READINGS:**

IS 58:1-9 | PSALM 51 | MT 9:14-15

### **REFLECTION QUOTE:**

"Fasting helps express, deepens, confirms the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves, to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God." (Andrew Murray)

### **OVERVIEW:**

It's not always about WHAT we do, but HOW we do it. As the father of two teenagers I must remind my children to not allow their face to show how angry they are when asked to do something that isn't in line with their current plans.

Today's reading from Isaiah states pretty clearly that we have to watch how we present ourselves with what we give up, or choose to do, in our fasting and almsgiving for Lent. This also includes the need to put away our selfishness in not telling everyone all the details of how hard Lent is, but instead share its beauty to make you anew.

All of our actions should be a reflection of the person Christ is calling us to be even in our sacrifice. Don't compare yourself to others and certainly don't draw attention to yourself for how you are offering yourself to God... Mind Your Business.



### **ACTION:**

Pray today for forgiveness from God for any way that you have made your sacrifice only about yourself instead of it being part of your relationship with Him.

### **REFERENCE:**

“It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of *interiority* is even more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection:”

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1779)*

## day 4 – “perfectly imperfect”

### **READINGS:**

IS 58:9b-14 | PSALM 86 | LK 5:27-32

### **REFLECTION QUOTE:**

“Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners.” (LUKE 5:32)

### **OVERVIEW:**

“I’m not as holy as that person.” “God could never love someone like me.” “My life is a mess, I can’t even think about praying.” These are all expressions I’ve heard from people at one time or another. It’s sad to me because they’re missing the point of the healing love found in Jesus Christ.

We don’t have to have it all together. We don’t need to know how to quote every scripture verse. I’ll go as far as to say, we don’t even need to know how to pray. God doesn’t call us to have the right answers, He asks us to have the right heart.

The church is not made for the perfect. It is made for those who know they need God in their life to help them along the way to someday return to the Creator. Enjoy your imperfection, because the fact you desire for something better is a great place to be on your Lenten journey.

### **ACTION:**

What would you identify as your biggest flaw? Can you change it? When was the last time you asked Christ to take it while laying it at the foot of the cross? Spend time in prayer giving it to him today, visualizing your self placing it at His feet.

### **REFERENCE:**

“Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor*, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.”



*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1996)*

## day 5 – “daily battles” (first sunday of lent)

### READINGS:

DT 26:4-10 | PSALM 91 | ROM 10:8-13 | LK 4:1-13

### REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.” (Our Father)

### OVERVIEW:

One thing we don’t talk about enough is “Spiritual Warfare.” Anytime we desire a closer relationship with Christ, the devil will work harder to do what he can in order to persuade us away. The Father knew this would be part of our humanness, so the Spirit leads His Son, Jesus, into the desert to be tempted before he begins His earthly ministry. Jesus relies on the truth of the Bible and the bigger picture of salvation to deny the false promises of the evil one.

In the Our Father it’s why we pray the line “Lead us not into temptation...” We pray that we do not have to undergo the same tests as Christ because it was so hard, and we might fail. Remain strong in how the Lord taught you to pray when your desire for holiness invites a very cunning foe to try and derail your spiritual growth.

### ACTION:

Pray the Our Father today and concentrate on every single word and focus on what you are really saying. Ask for eyes wide open to see where your spiritual attacks are coming from.

### REFERENCE:

“The Holy Spirit makes us discern between trials, which are necessary for the growth of the inner man, and temptation, which leads to sin and death. We must also discern between being tempted and consenting to temptation. Finally, discernment unmasks the lie of temptation, whose object appears to be good, a “delight to the eyes” and desirable, when in reality its fruit is death.”

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2847)*

## day 6 – “who me?”

### READINGS:

LEV 19:1-2, 11-18 | PSALM 19 | MT 25 31-46

### REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” (MT 25:40)



## OVERVIEW:

We can tend to forget what Christ is asking from us in order to live a holy life. When He gives His Sermon on the Mount, He is explaining to the people that yes there were laws given in the Ten Commandments, but now there are new laws. These are laws of action. It isn't enough to just try and not screw up, but it's about working to be like Jesus in every way.

Yes, this Kingdom on Earth is for you and I to work hard to put as we lead others to Heaven with our living example. It's about how we use our gifts and what we do for others. Whether they are labeled as "Random Acts of Kindness" or "Volunteering," they are the very actions we need to do for others who need "God with skin on." Together, we change the world because we choose to serve. It's up to us and no one else.

## ACTION:

Find a new avenue to volunteer or church ministry to get involved in. Try to find a new ministry that challenges you to serve others in a way you haven't before.

## REFERENCE:

"The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God:"

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2447)*

day 7 - "for crying out loud"

## READINGS:

IS 55:10-11 | PSALM 34 | MT 6: 7-15

## REFLECTION QUOTE:

"The righteous cry out, the LORD hears and he rescues them from all their afflictions." (PSALM 34:18)

## OVERVIEW:

Reverence in prayer is a beautiful thing. Surrounded by candles, lifting our soul up to God in the quietness of the church so He can hear our desires. While that is a beautiful picture certain videos and movies depict, it's not always reality. I would go deeper to say that it's not what God wants all the time. He loves our passion to know that He can do all things. It's a combination of silence and crying out to God. Even blowing a trumpet when amazing things happen.

We read about this all through scripture. Abraham, Moses, Noah, Job, Jeremiah, they all cried out to God with deep emotion. In our times of distress, we go to the only Source we know who can heal our hurts in a



way nothing else in this world can. Sometimes, when it is just the two of you, the honesty must be real. This is acknowledgement that God can, and God will. Trust me, He's a big God, He can take it.

**ACTION:**

Have an honest conversation with the Lord this day without holding back your emotion. Pray for His grace to overwhelm you, calm your fears, and help you understand what you are going through.

**REFERENCE:**

“The need to involve the senses in interior prayer corresponds to a requirement of our human nature. We are body and spirit, and we experience the need to translate our feelings externally. We must pray with our whole being to give all power possible to our supplication.”

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2702)*