



WEEK 2: MARCH 9 – 14, 2022

day 8 – “Great Power, Great Responsibility”

READINGS:

JONAH 3:1-10 | PSALM 51 | LUKE 11:29-32

REFLECTION QUOTE:

“When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out.” (JONAH 3:10)

OVERVIEW:

In the movie, Spiderman, there is an awesome line: “With great power comes great responsibility.” As Catholic Christians, we are all given gifts and talents to play our part in changing the world; it’s called our vocation. Every once and a while we don’t like what we are being asked to do... we have to do it anyway. Today our readings tell us about how Jonah saves the city of Nineveh by helping them repent and change their hearts. Don’t forget though, Jonah didn’t trust God at first and wouldn’t go to Nineveh when he was originally asked... this is how he ended up in the belly of a whale. Guess what? He eventually went. Lent is as much about us placing our trust in God’s hands to be who He has created us to be. If we try and deny that He will still get us there, we just have to suffer lots of setbacks until we finally say yes.

ACTION:

Name a time God has asked you to do something hard. Did you say yes? If so, great. If you said no, pray for God to present you with the opportunity to make it right and live out His will for you.

REFERENCE:

“Your call will become clear as your mind is transformed by the reading of Scripture and the internal work of God’s Spirit. The Lord never hides His will from us. In time, as you obey the call first to follow, your destiny will unfold before you. The difficulty will lie in keeping other concerns from diverting your attention.”

(Chuck Swindoll)

day 9 – “Knock, Knock”

READINGS:

ESTHER 12: 14-16, 23-25 | PSALM 138 | MT 7:7-12

REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (MT 7:7)



OVERVIEW:

There's an old joke about a woman waiting for months to win the lottery. After crying out to God in anguish one night, the heavens open up and a voice says, "Hey Lady, help me out a little and go buy a ticket." Our expectation of faith is that God will just do things for us. Even the disciples who walked with Jesus waited for Him to do everything first. This is an unrealistic way to have a relationship. Married couples know they have to express their expectations, or it is a source of a lot of disagreements, so it is with God. We have to ask for what we want in order to receive it. Knock on the door, it will be opened for Him to welcome you in. Stop trying to do it all yourself or expecting your relationship with God to be one way. Instead of looking in all the windows and waiting to see if anyone is home or sitting on the steps crying, knock not once but twice.

ACTION:

Meditate and envision the opening of the door. Let it end with God opening the door and embracing you with a welcome home hug.

REFERENCE:

"To meditate on what we read helps us to make it our own by confronting it with ourselves. Here, another book is opened: the book of life. We pass from thoughts to reality. To the extent that we are humble and faithful, we discover in meditation the movements that stir the heart and we are able to discern them. It is a question of acting truthfully in order to come into the light: "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2706)

day 10 – "Taking the Fifth"

READINGS:

EZEKIEL 18:21-28 | PSALM 130 | MT 5:20-26

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord recalls the commandment, "You shall not kill," and adds to it the prescription of anger, hatred, and vengeance...." (CCC 2262)

OVERVIEW:

We are ten days into Lent, and we are hit with a biggie, "Thou shall not kill." The short version of the fifth commandment can have us breathing a sigh of relief. If I haven't physically murdered anyone, I am clear of having to confess this one... WRONG! The beauty of the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us of the fullness of Christ's message of this command. The fifth commandment is as much about how we use our words to attack someone else or even react in a way that wounds the Spirit of another person.

There is also a repercussion for our own soul when we allow hatred or anger to consume us. It replaces love in our hearts. Charity which Christ tells us is the greatest of all virtues. True love and hate cannot coexist if we haven't found a way to desire reconciliation.

ACTION:



Journal today about news stories, politics, religion, relationships, employment, or whatever situations that have given you unvirtuous thoughts and possibly even made you lash out. How can you handle it better? Seek out the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be made whole in the Lord.

REFERENCE:

"By recalling the commandment, "You shall not kill," our Lord asked for peace of heart and denounced murderous anger and hatred as immoral.

Anger is a desire for revenge. "To desire vengeance in order to do evil to someone who should be punished is illicit," but it is praiseworthy to impose restitution "to correct vices and maintain justice." *If anger reaches the point of a deliberate desire to kill or seriously wound a neighbor, it is gravely against charity; it is a mortal sin. The Lord says, "Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment."*

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2302)

day 11 – "Keep Your Enemies Closer"

READINGS:

DT 26:16-19 | PSALM 119 | MT 5:43-48

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"Unforgiveness is like drinking poison yourself and waiting for the other person to die." (Unknown)

OVERVIEW:

I must admit, forgiveness is a rough one for many of us. It's nice in theory but the memories we have of our hurt make us never forget. This is exactly why it's necessary. Yes, we offer forgiveness to loved ones to let them know we can move on. What about our enemies? We must keep them closer in prayer, so we don't continually allow our own thoughts to poison us.

By praying, for your enemies and those who hurt you, you begin the healing process of letting go. Additionally, you are praying so that they never hurt anyone else the same way. Some people don't even realize what they did. It might be your prayers that help them to see the grace of God and change their ways. If that's the case, then your suffering will not have been without a purpose.

Lent is a great time to focus on forgiveness because even Jesus was able to offer forgiveness to those who put the nails in His hands. Do you realize that Jesus offers you forgiveness every time you hurt Him?

ACTION:

Pray hard today for everyone you are struggling to forgive.

REFERENCE:

"Christ died out of love for us, while we were still "enemies." The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our enemies, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself.



The Apostle Paul has given an incomparable depiction of charity: "charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1825)

day 12 - "Valley Living" (second sunday of lent)

READINGS:

GN 15:5-12 | PSALM 27 | PHL 3:17-4:1 | LK 9:28-36

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"Master, it is good that we are here...." (LK 9:33)

OVERVIEW:

The story of the Transfiguration is one of my favorite stories as it relates to how we react when God shows up in our life. Peter is so excited on the mountain to see Christ's glory that he just wants to set up tents for everybody and stay there forever. However, once the clouds come over, he basically freaks out with the other apostles and they become afraid because they can't see him anymore. Jesus reappears, then sends them down the mountain and tells them not to tell anyone what happened.

So, what does this mean for you and I? Our life is not lived on the mountain top, always being able to see Jesus at work. 99% of our time is about living in the valley trying to figure out how to get back up there. If we hear the stories of others or remember what it was like when we experienced it, then we strive to allow Christ to reveal Himself time and time again.

Maybe you have had a "mountain top moment" through a renewal or a retreat and you felt like you touched the face of God. You may have also experienced something that the rest of the world didn't experience. We all have different times and experiences of "mountain top moments." Christ is revealing himself every day in our "valley living." Be open to see him in the same glory as you did on your mountain.

ACTION:

Focus on seeing Christ in the world today. In every place you go, in everyone you see, look to see how He is revealing His glory to you.

REFERENCE:

"Peter did not yet understand this when he wanted to remain with Christ on the mountain. It has been reserved for you, Peter, but for after death. For now, Jesus says: "Go down to toil on earth, to serve on earth, to be scorned and crucified on earth. Life goes down to be killed; Bread goes down to suffer hunger; the Way goes down to be exhausted on his journey; the Spring goes down to suffer thirst; and you refuse to suffer?"

(St. Augustine - Catechism 556)



day 13 – “Pound for Pound”

READINGS:

DN 9:4-10 | PSALM 79 | LK 6: 36-38

REFLECTION QUOTE:

“The measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” (LK 6:38)

OVERVIEW:

The scales of justice are a pretty good visual for today’s message. You see, the Gospel is telling us that how we measure others, will be how we will be measured. Simply put, however you judge other people, that’s what you’re asking for from God.

There is a simple quote that says, “Never judge the inside of your family or the outside of another.” We have no idea what other people are going through or what has made them who they are. It doesn’t mean we don’t work to help them remain accountable to their actions, but it does call us to walk with them compassionately. You don’t know their heart the way God does or what they desire but can’t accomplish.

In summary, stop judging others because we certainly don’t like when others do it to us.

ACTION:

Eliminate your judgement of others and the gossip that can accompany it. In this Lenten season and beyond, be brave enough to end conversations with others that include gossip.

REFERENCE:

“To avoid rash judgment, everyone should be careful to interpret insofar as possible his neighbor's thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way:

Every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another's statement than to condemn it. But if he cannot do so, let him ask how the other understands it. And if the latter understands it badly, let the former correct him with love. If that does not suffice, let the Christian try all suitable ways to bring the other to a correct interpretation so that he may be saved.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2478 – See the Eighth Commandment)