



WEEK 4: MARCH 23 – 29, 2022

day 22 – “Rules”

READINGS:

DT 4:1, 5-9 | PSALM 147 | MT 5:17- 19

REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. (MT 5:19)

OVERVIEW:

Going back to my Catholic grade school years, I recall a time I cut in line as we lined up for the bathroom. Sr. Josephine told me that if I was at the Cedar Point amusement park, they would throw me out because I broke the rules and cut in line. While I didn’t think this was that severe, I am telling you the story thirty-five years later so I would say it had an impact. She was reminding me that all of life has rules, and we are accountable.

We all have rules wherever we go. Expectations that people will make good choices and do what is best for the common good. Rules to avoid sin. While we may not like them, they do bring order where chaos could ensue; personally, or publicly. Think of God’s commandments as the overall measuring stick to how we are doing in life. Can you say you have been keeping them all? Pretty much every law and moral code of living is based on what God gave us thousands of years ago on that mountain.

ACTION:

What commandment are you struggling with most at this point in Lent or your life? Ask for the strength to make changes and avoid it going forward. Be accountable.

REFERENCE:

“The Ten Commandments state what is required in the love of God and love of neighbor. The first three concern love of God, and the other seven love of neighbor. *As charity comprises the two commandments to which the Lord related the whole Law and the prophets . . . so the Ten Commandments were themselves given on two tablets. Three were written on one tablet and seven on the other.*”

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2067)



day 23 - "Listen to Me!"

READINGS:

JER 7:23- 28 | PSALM 95 | LK 11:14-23

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"Listen to my voice; then I will be your God and you shall be my people." (JER 7:23)

OVERVIEW:

The quote from the philosopher Epictetus tells us, 'We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listentwice as much as we speak.' Isn't that the truth? Our words can often get us in to trouble, not because we say bad things, but because we keep talking when we should be listening.

God asks us to simply listen for his voice... it has all the answers we seek. If we can do this, it pushes our ego aside and places our personal desires second to what God wants for us. The hard part is we don't always like what He is telling us. It's His plan not ours. He has already lived our humanness through Jesus Christ and will never ask us to something He hasn't already done. In the end though, even Jesus had to sit and listen to what the Father had to say that night in the Garden.

ACTION:

Find a quiet place or even stop at church if you can. Spend five to ten minutes being still and listening; He is there, present in all things. Let Him speak even if His words land on our heart instead of our ears.

REFERENCE:

"Having your spiritual radar up in constant anticipation of His presence- even in the midst of the joyful chaos and regular rhythms of your everyday living- is paramount in hearing God, because sometimes the place and manner you find Him is the least spectacular, you'd expect."

(Priscilla Shirer)

day 24 - "Crazy Little Thing Called Love"

READINGS:

HOS 14:2-10 | PSALM 81 | MK 12:28-34

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mk 12:30)



OVERVIEW:

Love makes us do crazy things, doesn't it? Especially if it is pure. We all have the ability to witness those in relationships who have lived their vocation to love in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, with death being the only thing to make them apart.

I'm a hopeless romantic who loves to see the good guy win. Even in movies though where he does, there is always a point he gets hurt and somehow has to redeem himself. Sounds like the story of how Jesus gave himself for us. Everything He did for us was to show not only His love for us, but how we should love as well. Let love rule and remember it can do amazing things for you if you let it. It is one of our three main virtues and as the Catechism tells us *"The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God."* (CCC 1803 – Phil 4:8) We love because it makes us feel whole and close to God. Share it in every way you can.

ACTION:

Tell those closest to you today how much you love them. Then do an act of kindness for them that gives them an outward sign of your willingness to surrender to God's call to love deeply.

REFERENCE:

"LOVE - Any strong affection, closeness, or devotion to things or persons. The Greeks distinguished four types of love: storge, philia, eros, and agape. Storge, familial love, is a word for the bond that exists between one who loves and persons, animals, and the things that surround him. It is compatible with quite a bit of taken-for-grantedness or even of hatred at times. Philia pertains to friends, freely chosen because of mutual compatibility and common values. Eros is passion, not only of a sexual nature, but also of an aesthetic or spiritual nature, for what is conceived of as supremely beautiful and desirable. Agape love is manifested when one person has much to give to another more needy. It is generous self-donation without concern for reward. Such distinctions become especially important in discernments about marriage, because the strength of eros love may blind one to the absence of the types of love needed to experience a good Christian bond that, with God's grace, can endure "till death do us part."

(Catholic Encyclopedia - Our Sunday Visitor)

day 25 - "Humility"

READINGS:

HOS 6:1-6 | PSALM 51 | LK 18:9-14

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"...everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." (LK 18:14)



OVERVIEW:

We are now 25 days into our Lenten journey. The simple fact that you are reading this means you are doing an amazing job... even if this is the first reflection you have stumbled upon after a while. Be thankful for your ability to desire growth in your faith life.

Now for the reality check... you're not great just because you listen to what I might say or different evangelizers are offering. Sounds harsh I know, but we have to give ourselves these reminders because it keeps us humble. If not, we can get comfortable and end up drifting away as others have. I also tell you this because if we do not humble ourselves, God will humble us... you don't want that.

Continue to grow, continue to gain a better understanding of all you believe. In the process remain humble to know where you have come from. Remember the words said during the preparation of the gifts, "He humbled Himself in our humanity so we could share in His divinity." If Christ is willing to humble Himself, we should be also.

ACTION:

Pray for the gift of humility. See where pride may have gotten in your way lately and seek out the changes you can make to refocus on living each day with dignity and grace.

REFERENCE:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit." The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs: The Word speaks of voluntary humility as "poverty in spirit"; the Apostle gives an example of God's poverty when he says: "For your sakes he became poor."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #2546)

day 26 - "Happy Easter" (fourth sunday of lent)

READINGS:

JOSH 5:9A, 10-12 | PSALM 34 | 2COR. 5:17-21 | LK 15:1-3, 11-32

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"Sunday is the pre-eminent day for the liturgical assembly, when the faithful gather "to listen to the word of God and take part in the Eucharist, thus calling to mind the Passion, Resurrection, and glory of the Lord Jesus, and giving thanks to God who 'has begotten them again, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead' unto a living hope" (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1167)



OVERVIEW:

Happy Easter!... No, you haven't gone to the wrong reflection. Even in our Lenten journey we have to remain hopeful and recognize EVERY Sunday is a mini-Easter.

My family still has dinner every Sunday with my mother. I am the youngest of three boys (51, 49, 44) and have a sister who is 32. Yes, we still all come with our children too. Why? Family is the most important thing and we have so much to celebrate. Even if nothing magical happens when we get together or if we all just watch TV, we are still together knowing who we belong to in this world.

Our faith is the same way. We are called together as church, sometimes even in our dysfunctionality, to be one and focus on Jesus' hope. Rejoice today knowing you are becoming a new creation and when this journey is over, we will celebrate the risen Christ. Today celebrate and know God can and God will.

ACTION:

Plan a family meal and enjoy the beauty of being together. If you don't have loved ones close to you that are related, invite other couples or friends and share why you are breaking bread together.

REFERENCE:

"It was above all on "the first day of the week," Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection, that the Christians met "to break bread."169 From that time on down to our own day the celebration of the Eucharist has been continued so that today we encounter it everywhere in the Church with the same fundamental structure. It remains the center of the Church's life."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1343)

day 27 - "Too Young to Die"

READINGS:

IS 65:17 -21 | PSALM 30 | JN 4:43-54

REFLECTION QUOTE:

"LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit. (PSALM 30:3)

OVERVIEW:

I was convinced I was going to die young. I am still young, so I hope that is not true physically, but it has already happened spiritually. God knew me before I was born and in the time, I pushed aside His love for a worldly life, He taught me to die to myself so I could let Him increase in every way.



All of us must die to something. It is about letting go and the surrender that takes place when we allow God to have “all of us.” It’s how we’re saved. Sacramentally we receive His grace in Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist when we are younger, but we still need to offer ourselves over to Him as we get older. It is the invitation that tells our creator, “I need to be remade because only in you will I ever be perfect.”

ACTION:

Remind Jesus today with your own words that He is Lord and your Savior. Cast aside what has chained you from giving all of yourself to Him. Die unto the old self, so a new creation can be born.

REFERENCE:

“The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for: The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator.”

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #27)

day 28 – “Pick Up Your Mat”

READINGS:

EZ 47:1-9,12 | PSALM 46 | JN 5:1 – 16

REFLECTION QUOTE:

“Rise, take up your mat, and walk.” (JN 5:8)

OVERVIEW:

Jesus does for us what we can’t do ourselves. When we are paralyzed by decisions, struggles, and real pain, we must cry out to Christ and ask Him to wash over us with His living water.

Every miracle Christ performed during His ministry was mind blowing to those who were witness. He wants to do the same for you. Ask for His healing, especially from the things that you have no idea how to be healed from... He will lead you to the waters because of your faith. Know even if it’s not possible physically, there is an internal healing that will always take place.



ACTION:

Ask the Lord to do big things in your life today... not just little things. Show Him you believe He is almighty and can offer you an amazing things.

REFERENCE:

"The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of Penance and the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick"

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1421)