



WELCOME TO THE CAFE LENTEN PRAYER BOOK!

The CAFE Team is delighted to offer this book of reflections to accompany you on your Lenten journey. This collection is proudly “homegrown,” in that parishioners participated in every aspect of production from writing reflections, to typing, proofreading, and editing. In that sense, it is very much your book. We hope you will take its message to heart.

A few people deserve special commendation: Carol Poplin for all the typing; Cindy Marcotty for layout; Jose Burgos and Rosa & Mike Flores for Spanish translation; Jan Prisco and Giselle Dupuis (overall coordinator) for proofing and editing; Sara Ballas for the cover; and technical assistance from Tricia Clarke. A special thanks to Jean Sweeney for being our all around “go to” volunteer, graciously filling in wherever needed.

As you read and reflect over the next 40 days, may these words come to life for you in the prayerful presence of God the Father. And may you eagerly and humbly open wide the doors of your hearts and minds to Christ in the days to come.

~The CAFE Team~

LENT '99

**Open wide the doors to Christ
For too long have we barred the door.**

**Looking out for self aggrandizement
We have built up walls of competition.
Afraid of trust we have developed security
In locks and chains and bolts.
We have put peepholes on doorways
To screen our guests with discrimination.
Double gateways secure our luxuries.
We end up prisoners in our own castles.**

**Let us practice faith in self-surrender
Let us offer the hand to friend and stranger.
Let us trust the air with open lungs
And believe only in Christ for safety.**

**Open wide the doors to Christ
For too long have we barred the door**

Fr. Gerry Creedon

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 Joel 2: 12 - 18

“We are ambassadors of God.” (2 Corinthians 5: 20)

2 Corinthians 5: 20 - 6: 2

“*Así que somos embajadores de Cristo...*” (2 Corintios 5:20)

REFLECTION:

Ambassadors are chosen to represent where they are from. In a way, we are all ambassadors. We are ambassadors of God because He chose us to represent Him in this world. Not only do we represent God, but also we represent our cultural background, our school, job, family, and ourselves. Therefore, it is important that we remember who and what we represent in all that we do.

PRAYER:

Dear God, I love you so much. Thank you for the opportunity everyday to represent you and all that you have done in my life.

Querido Dios, Te quiero tanto. Te agradezco por la oportunidad que me das todos los dias para representarte y por todo lo que haz hecho en mi vida.

ACTION:

Today I will learn something new about myself and remember that my actions should represent God, the Almighty, and His love for me.

Cami Roa

THURSDAY, 2ND DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 18 Deuteronomy 30: 15 - 20

“What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?” (Luke 9: 25) *¿De qué le sirve al hombre ganar el mundo entero, si se pierde o se destruye a si mismo? (Lucas 9: 25)*

Luke 9: 22 - 25

REFLECTION:

As I read this, it was very hard for me to get what it was trying to say. Finally, I thought of it. I believe that this Scripture talks about evil things, such as drugs, alcohol, etc. If you think about it, people find bad ways to find short-term happiness, and they feel like everything will be OK in the long run, while you and I both know that this type of happiness can only last a short time. So my point is: what have they gained by letting some other being take them over? (This can also be by cheating or lying and other things.) You are only fooling yourself.

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, I ask you to let people realize that true happiness is found within You and their hearts. Please show them that money or materials cannot satisfy a person as much as You in their lives.

Querido Dios, te pido que ayude a las gente realizar que verdadera felicidad se encuentra contigo y sus corazones. Por favor enseñales que el dinero y las cosas materiales no satisfacen a la persona como tu.

ACTION:

Today I will think of others and help others before myself.

Rosie Fitzpatrick

FRIDAY, 3RD DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 19**Isaiah 58: 1 - 9a****Matthew 9: 14-15**

“Look, what good is fasting when you keep fighting and quarreling?” (Isaiah 58: 4) *“Ustedes ayunan entre peleas y contiendas, y golpean con maldad.” (Isaías 58: 4)*

REFLECTION:

There are many that fulfill the sacrifices that God asks of them, but many are hypocrites. They do not treat those around them as God asks them. They wonder why God does not pay attention to them. This scripture passage answers their questions. The Lord will not protect those who do not truly do His works. We must fulfill all of God’s commandments with a pure heart, to be truly Christian.

In the passage from Matthew, Jesus is asked by John the Baptist’s followers why Jesus’ followers do not fast. Jesus responds by asking the question: “Should the bridegroom’s friends mourn and go without food while he is with them?” By this Jesus means that why mourn if He is still here. There are many things one can do to do the Lord’s work. Do it now. Why do something that is appropriate for a later time?

PRAYER:

Lord, guide us in our everyday lives. Send your spirit upon us, to show the way to your light. Though there are many things in our world that try to block out your light, let us be the ones to brighten it.

Señor, guíanos en nuestras vidas diarias. Manda tu Espíritu sobre nosotros para mostrar el camino a tu luz. Aunque hay muchas cosas en nuestro mundo que tratan de interferir con tu luz, déjanos ser los que la iluminamos.

ACTION:

Today I will do what the Lord asks of me with all my heart. I will help those who I can and expect nothing in return.

Adonay Roberto Jimenez

SATURDAY, 4TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 20**Isaiah 58: 9 - 14****Luke 5: 27 - 32**

“When thou shall pour out thy soul to the hungry and shalt satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise up in darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noonday.” (Isaiah 58: 10)

“Si te das a ti mismo en servicio del hambriento, si ayudas al afligido en su necesidad, tu luz brillará en la oscuridad, tus sombras se convertirán en luz de mediodía.” (Isaías 58: 10)

REFLECTION:

Every time that something wrong happens to me that I don’t deserve, I wonder why. Sometimes I even feel as though God has abandoned me. I’m always stuck in a situation that makes me go over my day in my mind and reflect on the bad things I have done. When I don’t find anything wrong in my day, I ask myself why is it that God let this happen to me? I think to myself, “I haven’t done anything wrong, but I haven’t done anything good either.” The passage from Isaiah talks about how God shows mercy to those who show mercy to their neighbors. Many times I expect only good things to happen when I do nothing to help. As my grandma always told me - treat others as you want to be treated.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me realize that You are present in all of Your people: the rich, the poor, the young, the old and myself. Amen.

Jesus, Ayúdame reconocer tu presencia en toda tu gente; el pobre, el rico, el joven, el viejo y en mi mismo. Amen

ACTION:

Today I will earn your love, God. In my own special way.

Tadeo Reyes

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 21 **Genesis 2: 7 - 9; 3: 1 - 7**

Romans 5: 12 - 19

“The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground . . . so man became a living being.” (Genesis 2: 7)

“Entonces Dios el Señor formó al hombre de la tierra misma...Así el hombre comenzó a vivir. (Genesis 2: 7)

REFLECTION:

By creating Adam and giving him life, God shaped all of us from the clay in His hands. Often enough, I have not been pleased with the form He shaped me into, and many others feel the same way. Today, I laughingly thought the clay He used for me must have been a little lumpy. This passage, however, reminded me that my being is as perfect as a human’s can be, because God Himself made me. He created all of us with His own hands, therefore, we are beautiful. True, our beings take a lot of work to keep healthy, but it is really just a small repayment for such a precious gift.

PRAYER:

God, please, guide us to a better understanding of ourselves and You.

Dios, por favor, guíanos hacia un mejor entendimiento de nosotros y de tí.

ACTION:

Today, I will remember that since God made us, we are all beautiful to Him.

Bonnie Weniger

MONDAY, 6TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 22 **1 Peter 5: 1 - 4**

Matthew 16: 13 - 19

“ . . .so that when the chief Shepherd appears you will win for yourselves the unfading crown of glory.” (1 Peter 5: 4)

“Así, cuando aparezca el Pastor principal, ustedes recibirán la corona de la gloria, una corona que jamás se marchitará.” (1 Pedro 5: 4)

REFLECTION:

Isn’t this really what I want for myself and for those I love, for those entrusted to my care? Do I want to take this journey with Him, to one day see Jesus face to face? Peter shows me the way. Am I listening? He tells me to watch over my people willingly and generously. To be an example to them -- not to lord it over them, but to give the care of a good shepherd. When the Chief Shepherd calls me, hopefully, I will realize the message: “Well done good and faithful servant. Your reward in heaven will be great.”

PRAYER:

Come, Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd of my life. Help me to be more like You each day that I may better lead all those You have entrusted to my care. So that together, we will realize that unfading crown of glory.

Ven Señor Jesús, Pastor Principal de mi vida. Ayúdame a ser mas como tu cada dia para poder guiar mejor aquellos que tu encommiendas a mi cuidado. Así podemos realizar esa corona que jamás se marchitará.

ACTION:

Through prayer and service, to strive daily to lead by example, those entrusted to my care.

Sister Benedict, OSB

TUESDAY, 7TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 23

Isaiah 55: 10 - 11

Matthew 6: 7 - 15

“...Giving seed to him who sows and bread to him who eats...”(isaiah 55: 10) “...*producen la semilla para sembrar y el pan para comer.*” (Isaiah 55: 10)

REFLECTION:

Sometimes I find myself feeling overwhelmed with the events and happenings in my life; all the obligations and duties that I have acquired, juggling family and work and everything else that goes with it. And I get so tangled up that I forget that God is there to help me if only I would listen. God has left His seed (word) for us to sow and make fertile, but that won't happen unless we act. Instead of feeling sorry for myself, I should stop a moment and listen to His word, and let it fill my heart. Then, I can sow the seed and turn it into bread that will feed my family and all the people that I find in my path.

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, do not give up on me. Let me listen to Your word so I can make it fertile, transforming it into good actions towards myself and those around me.

Querido Señor, no me abandones. Dejame escuchar tu palabra para hacerla fertil, transformala en buenas acciones hacia los que me rodean y a mi mismo..

ACTION:

Today, when I am so tied up in my obligations, I will try to stop and think that if I don't nourish that seed, my actions will not have the same meaning.

LH

WEDNESDAY, 8TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 24

Jonah 3: 1 - 10

Luke 11: 29 - 32

“...everyone shall turn from his evil way and from the violence he has in hand.” (Jonah 3: 8b)

“Deje cada uno su mala conducta y la violencia que ha estado cometiendo hasta ahora...” (Jonás 3: 8)

REFLECTION:

Jonah went through town proclaiming the need to repent. In Lent our 40 days invite us to be sorry, begin again, be reconciled. This scripture allows me to ask myself, “what violence is in my thought, my word, my heart? Is there some retribution anger I need to let go of against someone who hurt me?” Ah, the Word of God invites ME to give up my VIOLENCE in prejudicial thinking, grudges, or words against another. And it invites our world to do the same.

PRAYER:

O Christ, May your Word transform our hearts so we can let go of vestiges of hurt, of violence. Teach us how to do this, so we are filled with the power of your loving. Teach our world to do the same.

Cristo Señor, que tu palabra transforma nuestros corazones para que podamos dejar atras la violencia y el daño. Enseñanos como hacer esto para que podamos ser llenado del poder de to amor.

ACTION:

When you are angry at someone today, tell God how you feel and allow Him to soften your violence.

Jean Sweeney

THURSDAY, 9TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 25 Esther C: 12, 14 - 16, 23 - 25

Matthew 7: 7 - 12

“But I did this so that I might not set human glory above the glory of God, and I will not bow down to anyone but you, who are my Lord; and I will not do these things in pride.” (Ester C 12: 14)
“*Pero hice esto para que no elevaría la gloria humana sobre la gloria divina, y no me inclinare a nadie menos a ti, quien eres mi Señor; y no hare estas cosas en orgullo.*” (Ester)

REFLECTION:

Dorothy Day wrote that pride is one of the greatest obstacles in learning to love. A couple of years ago, as a teacher, I reprimanded a student in the hallway outside of the school office for having done something without permission. Inside the office were the secretary, principal, and other students. Normally, I avoided disciplining students in front of others; however, this afternoon I did. Needless to say, not only did this student realize that I disapproved of her actions, but so did everyone else nearby. I told myself I would apologize to her, yet I never did. Why could I never find the time to say I was sorry? Did pride interfere?

I often struggle with pride, whether it be seeking forgiveness or forgiving another. Pride also can become a motive when defending my viewpoint. At times, it becomes more important that I am right than it does that I discern God’s will or put on the person of Christ and reach out with a spirit of love.

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, fill my heart with Your love. Give me the strength to forgive and accept forgiveness. Help me to overcome my pride so that I might understand Your will and share Your love with those around me.

Querido Señor, lléna mi corazón con tu amor. Dáme la fortaleza para poder perdonar y aceptar el perdón. Ayúdame a superar mi orgullo para que pueda entender tu voluntad y compartir tu amor con los que me rodean.

ACTION:

Pray for someone who has wronged you, or ask forgiveness from someone you have wronged. Also, read **The Hiding Place** by Corrie Ten Boom, a true story about two sisters who continue to love and forgive in the midst of Hitler’s concentration camps.

Anne Marie Kaufmann

FRIDAY, 10TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 26

Ezekiel 18: 21 - 18

Matthew 5: 20 - 26

“First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister; then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5: 24)

“*...deja ahí tu ofrenda ante el altar, anda primero a hacer las paces con tu hermano y entonces vuelve a presentarla.*” (Mateo 5: 24)

REFLECTION:

This reading reminds me of relationships taken for granted and left untended. When a garden is not weeded, a plant becomes choked and stifled. When I do not nurture relationships with my brothers and sisters, the same thing can happen. That relationship falters and the weedy problems fester, not allowing love to grow and nurture us. Though long past childhood, there are still times I hold a grudge and hang on to an irritation or a resentment instead of talking it over and working it out. Invariably when I bring myself to address the issue, to reconcile with my brother or sister, to weed the garden, I feel closer to them and more aware of God’s love working through us both.

PRAYER:

Thank you, Lord, for your guidance. You challenge me to weed out the grudges and hurts that I have allowed to creep into my relationships. My strength comes from You, and through Your love, I know I can reconcile with my brothers and sisters. Let me be mindful that I am a sign of Your love to others.

Gracias, Señor, por tu consejo. Tu me retas a deshacerme de los rencores y dolores que he permitido entrar a mis relaciones. Mi fuerza viene de ti, y por medio de tu amor yo se que me puedo reconciliar con mis hermanos y hermanas. Déjame estar consciente que soy una señal de tu amor para todos.

ACTION:

Reach out to a sister, brother, friend, spouse, or parent with whom you are having difficulty. Let them know that you love them.

Brigid Doherty

SATURDAY, 11TH DAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 27

Deuteronomy 26: 16 - 19

Matthew 5: 43 - 48

“So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5: 48) *“Por lo tanto, sean perfectos como es perfecto su Padre que está en el Cielo.” (Mateo 5: 48)*

REFLECTION:

Today, after reading Matthew, I thought, “well, how can I be perfect?” For no one is perfect, but, as I reflected, perfect is how you as a person act. How you do unto others. How you pray. God invites me to give it a try. Do not judge. This will be a lesson and a renewal for me.

PRAYER:

My God, make me to give willingly. Transform my mind to think as You would think. Make me a better person and let me see clearly into Your heart.

Mi Dios, hazme dar con toda voluntad. Convierte mi mente para que piense como tu piensas. Hazme una persona mejor para poder ver claramente en tu corazón.

ACTION:

Today my actions are to try and be more God-like. Not perfect! Make changes in my life.

Cecilia Brady

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT, FEBRUARY 28

Genesis 12: 1 - 4a

2 Timothy 1: 8b - 10

“Bear your share of the hardship which the gospel entails...He has robbed death of it’s power.” (2 Timothy 1: 8,9)

“Acepta tu parte en los sufrimientos que vienen por causa del mensaje de salvación...El destruyó el poder de la muerte.” (2 Timoteo 1: 8,9)

REFLECTION:

A few years back, I went through a very rough period. My father died suddenly, and my husband and I suffered several miscarriages, all within a very short time. We were mentally and spiritually exhausted and felt abandoned and alone. Paul’s letter reminds us that everyone experiences difficulties in life, no matter how perfect things may appear to others. Remembering this helped us to understand that we were not alone in our grief and loneliness. The end of Paul’s letter gives hope and inspiration to anyone dealing with grief and fear. For if we remember that death is not an end, but a glorious passage, it is easier to let those we love go on ahead of us.

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, thank you for bringing those I love into my life and for the time I have shared with them. Grant me the peace that comes from accepting Your will and comfort all those who grieve.

Señor Jesús, gracias por traer a mi vida a todos aquellos que yo quiero y por los tiempos que he compartido con ellos. Concedeme la tranquilidad que llega cuando aceptamos tu voluntad y consuela a todos aquellos que lamentan algo.

ACTION:

Today, I will remember that hard times do not come to stay, they “come to pass.”

Lisa Picard

MONDAY, 13TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 1 Daniel 9: 4b - 10

Luke 6: 36 - 38

“Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured to your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” (Luke 6: 38)

“Den, y se les dará; recibirán una medida bien llena, apretada y rebosante; porque, con la medida que ustedes midan, serán medidos.” (Lucas 6: 38)

REFLECTION:

What do I want from life? More love, more money, more recognition? I know that material things will never satisfy my yearnings. What I really want is to give more to life. I feel that as I give more, I become more - and I give the very best to my family, my friends, and my world. Yes, it is in giving that I so richly receive. My ~~mouth~~ over and my awareness of God has no limits.

PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for all Your blessings and let genuine kindness be a way of life to all of us.

Señor, gracias por todas tus bendiciones y deja que tu bondad guie nuestras vidas.

ACTION:

Help any way you can with every way you can. Then go home and shut your mouth.

Marissa Yatco

TUESDAY, 14TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 2

Isaiah 1: 10, 16 - 20

Matthew 23: 1 - 12

“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matthew 23: 12)

“Porque el que se hace grande será rebajado, y el que se humilla será engrandecido.” (Mateo 23: 12)

REFLECTION:

How do we see humility? Are we guilty at times of being proud - haughty - above others? Do we consider ourselves better than others? “Her hair is a mess - I wonder when it was last washed?” “His clothes look like he slept in them!” What is God’s message to us in Matthew ...the greater among you will be your servant! Do we really believe that? That was probably true two thousand years ago in Jesus’ time, but now? Now - when clothes and cars and computers and electronic games really matter? Does not my working hard to get ahead make me more important in God’s eyes? Does not my hard-earned Mercedes show me that I have what it takes to succeed and maybe give me a little edge in front of God? Does this not give me even a little right to BE SERVED? Or do all my “things” require rather that I work harder to be humble? That I have to work even harder to get to the Kingdom of God? Must I, too, serve others? Maybe our success means we must be the servant of others. How can I do that? Rather than disparaging, I might want to offer help to the one with the bad hair or the rumpled clothing. Jesus’ perspective on the world is much different from our worldly view. Let us see others through Jesus’ eyes and try to be His servant!

PRAYER:

Lord, wash away my pride and fill me with a sense of God’s unconditional love for all those I meet - especially those in most need of your mercy!

Señor, aparta mi orgullo y lléname con un sentido del amor incondicional de Dios para todos aquellos en mi camino, especialmente a todos aquellos con la necesidad mas grande de tu misericordia.

ACTION:

Look at others today as more important than yourself.

Duffy Kiko

WEDNESDAY, 15TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 3**Jeremiah 18: 18 - 20****Matthew 20: 17 - 28**

“...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve...” (Matthew 20: 28) “el Hijo del hombre no vino para que le sirvan, sino para servir...” (Mateo 20: 28)

REFLECTION:

During this Lenten season of sacrifice, we read how Jesus clearly stated His purpose: to serve others. If He, who is God, can humbly serve others, surely I can follow that example, right? Nevertheless, I find myself impatient with those who won't serve me or God the way I think they should. I can even get huffy with God when He doesn't "make" life serve my needs according to my plan. If I instead concentrate on following Jesus' example of serving God by serving others, I will live in greater harmony with G

PRAYER:

To serve: It's why you came for me Para servir: es por eso que viniste
 Help me to do the same for Thee. Ayúdame a hacer lo mismo por Ti.

I'll serve the poor, the sick, with grace Sirvire al pobre, al enfermo con gracia
 And see in them Your love, Your face. Y vere en ellos tu amor, tu rostro.

You gave yourself in bread, in wine Tu te ofreces en pan, en vino
 Thy will be done; Thy will, not mine. Que se compla tu voluntad, no la mía.

ACTION:

Pay attention to those who serve you today. Say "thank you;" show gratitude; tell them you appreciate their service. Learn from their example.

Mark Alves

THURSDAY, 16TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 4**Jeremiah 17: 5 - 10****Luke 16: 19 - 31**

“Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord.” (Jeremiah 17: 5)

“Maldito aquel que aparta de mi su corazón, que pone su confianza en los hombres y en ellos busca apoyo.” (Jeremías 17: 5)

REFLECTION:

How often we hear “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,” but how often are we reminded that God is a jealous God who wants our entire, heart, mind and soul? If our hearts are more focused on the worldly and material things than Him, then why complain when “things don't go our way” or when we feel down? God knows our hearts and wants us to put Him first above our man-made materials. Knowing this, however, is not enough to make God reign within us. It is not said one day and forevermore the case. It is something that requires daily and almost hourly desire and devotion. In Jeremiah, we are reminded in a very strong manner that God will give everyone of us according to what flows out of our hearts, the fruits of our being.

PRAYER:

Lord, it is my desire to have you reign in my heart. Give me the mind to stay focused on you.
Señor, es mi deseo que tu reines en mi corazón. Ayuda me mantener la mente enfocada hacia ti.

ACTION:

In all things and circumstances, good or bad in my world, I will trust God above anything.

Rosa Flores

FRIDAY, 17TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 5**Genesis 37: 3 - 4, 12 - 13a, 17b - 28****Matthew 21: 33 - 43, 45 - 46**

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” (Matthew 21: 42)

“La piedra que los constructores despreciaron se ha convertido en la piedra principal.” (Mateo 21: 42)

REFLECTION:

This reading from Matthew should make us realize that all people have a place in making God’s world a better place. Even in the work place, he who contributes the least, adds a stone to build the whole.

PRAYER:

Lord, give me the wisdom and patience to understand that all of us have something to contribute.
Señor, dame la sabiduría y la paciencia de reconocer que todos tenemos algo que contribuir.

ACTION:

Try to remember that God sees all men from what they offer from their hearts.

Jose Burgos

SATURDAY, 18TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 6

Micah 7: 14 - 15, 18 - 20

Luke 15: 1 - 3, 11 - 32

“But we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, and now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.” (Luke 15: 32)

“Pero ahora es muy justo hacer fiesta y alegrarnos, porque tu hermano, que estaba muerto, ha vuelto a vivir; se había perdido y lo hemos encontrado.” (Lucas 15: 32)

REFLECTION:

So many times I forget to be thankful for the gifts that I am given. I forget to thank God for all of His many benefits and graces and take for granted His loving kindness. I count myself lucky, say that fate was on my side or even flippantly say, “Thank God!” And those are the times when I’m aware of such gifts. My life is full of miracles, large and small. God has granted me these gifts as His child, one of His beloved. My love should be a celebration of these gifts, and I should take pleasure in them and celebrate.

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, thank you for all the gifts of my days and nights. Grant me the grace to see Your hand in all of the generous blessing You bestow upon me.

Querido Señor, gracias por todos los dones de mis días y mis noches. Otórgame la gracia de ver tus obras en todas las bendiciones abundantes que me confieres.

ACTION:

Today, I will pay close attention to the blessings in my life. I will take time to look for them and examine the day’s events for God’s love in all its many forms.

Jamie Fitzgerald

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, MARCH 7**Exodus 17: 3 - 7****Romans 5: 1 - 2, 5 - 8**

“It is precisely in this that God proves his love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5: 8)

“*Pero Dios prueba que nos ama, en que, cuando todavía éramos pecadores, Cristo murió por nosotros.*” (Romanos 5: 8)

REFLECTION:

It is easy for me to look at what I do - where I succeed and where I fail and where it matters most in my life. However, this reminder from Scripture takes me back to the basics. It is what God has done for me - and for my neighbor - that assures each one of us of our worth despite our missteps and sins. Without this reassuring reminder, peace and healing would be hard to come by.

PRAYER:

Lord, make me cling to my worth, because it springs from you. Remember your love for me, not my sins.

Dios, ayúdame a mantener mi dignidad, porque de Ti brota. Recuerda Tu amor por mí, no mis pecados.

ACTION:

Consider: Do I tend to rely on my efforts more than on God’s mercy?

Pong Riguera

MONDAY, 20TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 8**2 Kings 5: 1 - 15a****Luke 4: 24 - 30**

“Naaman left in a rage, saying, “I thought that surely he would come out and stand there, pray to the Lord his God, wave his hand over the diseased spot, and thus cure King’s 5: 11)

“*Naamán, se enojó y se retiró. Había pensado: “A mi llegada saldrá personalmente a encontrarme, se detendrá y rogará a Yavé. Con su mano tocará la parte enferma y quedaré sano.”* (2 Reyes 5: 11)

REFLECTION:

Often when God’s word for me is right there, I miss it because I am waiting for a different message. I continue to ask Him, when all I really have to do is listen to Him and hear His word. He leads me to the place where I can find Him, but then I get caught up in distractions, missing what it is that He wants me to do. I have prayed for a long time for God to heal my daughter of mental illness, and He answers me, “in MY time.” And yet, I become anxious, wanting her to be healed NOW. His direction is in the Scriptures which tell me to trust in the Lord, and He will take care of me.

PRAYER:

O Lord, hear my prayer. And help me to hear Your answer. Let Your will be done, O Lord.

O Señor, escucha mi oración. Y ayúdame a escuchar tu respuesta. Que se haga tu voluntad, o Señor.

ACTION:

Today, I will be quiet and listen to God’s Word for me. I will try to remember that He is in charge, and I can give Him all my worries and cares. He will lighten my load.

Janice and George Macdonald

TUESDAY, 21ST DAY OF LENT, MARCH 9 Daniel 3: 25, 34 - 43

Matthew 18: 21 - 35

“Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.’” (Matthew 18: 21 - 23)

“*Entonces Pedro fue y pregunto a Jesus: ‘Señor, ¿Cuantas veces deberé perdonar a mi hermano, si me hace algo malo? ¿Hasta siete?’ Jesús contestó: ‘No digas siete veces, sino hasta setenta y siete veces.’*” (Mateo 18: 21-23)

REFLECTION:

It often appears to me that I’m O.K. but others are not. I could be serene today if only someone would “do right” by me. I find myself stressed out because that someone has troubled me once more . . . and I’m worn out with frequent trouble from him. But this scripture speaks to forgiveness. I’m guided by this scripture to forgive again and again. Jesus doesn’t wear out forgiving a person. Jesus doesn’t stop at forgiving someone as many as seven times. Jesus tells me that I am to continue forgiving others as he continues to forgive me. I breathe deeply and turn toward forgiveness. I discover that I relax as I forgive.

PRAYER:

Lord, help me to develop a forgiving heart every day. Guide me by your example of constant love and forgiveness. Let me find the courage to forgive.

Señor, ayudame a desarrollar un corzaón que perdone cada dia. Guíame con tu ejemplo de amor continuo y misericordia. Dejame encontrar la valentia para perdonar.

ACTION:

Today I will focus not upon an offense against me but upon the person ... and I will forgive.

Jack Vaster

WEDNESDAY, 22ND DAY OF LENT, MARCH 10 Deuteronomy 4: , 5 - 9

Matthew 5: 17 - 19

“Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true.” (Mat. 5: 17)

“*No crean ustedes que yo he venido a poner fin a la ley ni a las enseñanzas de los profetas; no he venido a ponerles fin, sino a darles su verdadero significado.*” (Mateo 5: 17)

REFLECTION:

The readings today talk about the law and the fact that Jesus came to make the law and the teachings of the prophets come true. My initial reaction to these readings was not positive. I do not like a lot of rules and regulations. I thought about what law Jesus taught when He was on earth. Earlier in Matthew 5, He teaches the people about the beatitudes and at another place in the Gospel of John, Jesus tells the apostles and us: “My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you.” (John 15: 12) For me this is simple and basic, and it helps me deal with the people I live with and meet each day. I can start each day thanking God for His love for me, asking God to help me love, and end the day by asking simply how did I love today?

PRAYER:

My God, I am grateful for the way You love and care for me each day. Help me to share Your love with those around me each day.

Mi Dios, te agradezco por la manera en que me quieres y me cuidas cada dia. Ayúdame a compartir tu amor con todos aquellos que me rodean cada dia.

ACTION:

Today I will try to love in a small practical way; a note, a phone call, some extra minutes of listening, perhaps saying “no” and setting boundaries when loving someone calls for that.

Mimi Fitzgerald

THURSDAY, 23RD DAY OF LENT, MARCH 11

Jeremiah 7: 23 - 28

Luke 11: 14 - 23

“Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste.” (Luke 11: 17 - 18) *“Todo pais dividido en bandos enemigos, se destruye a si mismo,. . .” (Lucas 11: 17, 18)*

REFLECTION:

My life is one of constant doings and being busy. Full time job - commuting - home life - community interests and my Church. At times I feel very stressed - loaded down. This scripture reminded me of the importance of the survival of the whole - “principals before personalities” for the good of all. I often allow judgements and resentments to get in my way, and they hold me back and weigh me down. Thus, I feel stressed. For my own survival and the good of all I love, I must strive and uphold what is best for all - not just me.

PRAYER:

Lord, help me realize and know I am just a pebble on the beach, a worker amongst workers, who want to be a part of your kingdom.

Señor, ayudame realizar y saber: que yo soy simplemente un grano de arena en la playa, un trabajador entre muchos, que quiere compartir tu reino.

ACTION:

Try to serve my God in all that I do and find joy in my doings.

Audrey Truumees

FRIDAY, 24TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 12 **Hosea 14: 2 - 10**

Mark 12: 28b - 34

“Sincere conversion” (Hosea 14: 1 - 10)

“Conversión sincera.” (Oseas 14: 1 - 10)

REFLECTION:

We must always return to God when we sin. Ask for forgiveness always. The victory of life over death is the resurrection of the body on the last day. Material things do not save us. God saves us. The Scripture of Mark teaches us the greatest commandment: “Love God above all and your neighbor as yourself.” Put God first in our lives. Help our neighbor and treat them with kindness and respect.

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, guide me and help me to do God’s will always.

Ven, Espiritu Santo, guia me y ayudame hacer tu voluntad siempre.

ACTION:

I will try to help my neighbor and treat them with respect and kindness.

Laurencia Sierra

SATURDAY, 25TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 13 **Hosea 6: 1 - 6**

Luke 18: 9 - 14

“Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord; His going forth is as sure as the dawn;...” (Hosea 6: 2)

“...for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.” (Luke 18: 14)
“...*Porque todo hombre que se hace grande será humillado, y el que se humille será hecho grande.*” (Lucas 18: 14)

REFLECTION:

What an impact - reading Hosea and about him for the first time. A man who surely knew humility or at least humbling experiences at a time when his land was in moral decay. Then reading Luke repeating Christ’s parable on the Pharisee and the sinner. From these scriptures the words “know the Lord” and “Humble” emerge in bold print. How many times have I had the opportunity to avoid those big and little incidents of “pride” and didn’t - had to put my two cents into a conversation; thought I was really strong enough to fight temptation alone; glad to see someone “got theirs” and on and on. But God always has a unique way of getting my attention, as to Who’s in charge and where I should be going. Sometimes His reminder is a gentle persuasion, and other times it’s a right to the jaw. So “I try to press on to know the Lord” for this to me is the path to humility (Love of God). All we have, have done and will do, we do only by the grace of God. All that He asks is that we do His will - “and He will raise us up that we may live before Him.

PRAYER:

Recalling the words of St. Elizabeth Anne Seton - “Help me to do God’s will, because it is His will and it is what He wants me to do.” Give me the grace to follow the path to Your kingdom.
Recordando las palabras de Sta. Elizabeth Anne Seton - “Ayúdame ha hacer la voluntad de Dios porque es su voluntad y es lo que él quiere que yo haga.” Dame la gracia para seguir el camino haciaa su reino.

ACTION:

Today I’ll take an extra minute or more to shed the planned routine of the day and see where God wants me to go in the direction of His will.

John Sirotniak

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, MARCH 14 **1 Samuel 16: 1b, 6 - 7, 10 - 13a** **Ephesians 5: 8 - 14**

“Live as children of the light, for the fruit of the light is goodness, justice, and truth.” Ephesians 5: 8 -9)
“*Pórtense como hijos de la luz; los frutos de la luz son la bondad, la justicia y la verdad bajo todas sus formas.*” (Efesios 5: 8-9)

REFLECTION:

I want to keep my life centered on Jesus, reading His Word, praying, and loving other people. I want to please God by keeping His commandments and being loving - by being open to the Holy Spirit and praising God. The works of darkness are of Satan and should be confessed and repented. When we live in the light of Jesus, the Holy Spirit alerts our conscience to the awareness of sin. Even sin done in secret is known by Jesus.

PRAYER:

Thank you, Jesus, for your light, shining in all believers, through the Holy Spirit. Jesus, may your light continually shine on others through the good works that I do.

Gracias, Jesús, por tu luz que alumbra en todos los creyentes por medio del Espíritu Santo. Jesús, que tu luz brille continuamente a todos por medio de las buenas acciones que yo hago.

ACTION:

Love others through the help of Jesus.

Sarah Mayhew

MONDAY, 27TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 15 **Isaiah 65: 17 - 21** **John 4: 43 - 54**

“Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe.” (John 4: 48) “*Jesús dijo: ‘Si ustedes no ven señales y prodigios, no creen.’*” (Juan 4: 48)

REFLECTION:

Jesus was speaking to me when he said this. Yes, Lord, it's true! I do need signs and wonders. I hope that you are not disappointed, but rather stating what you knew to be true for all people. I have enough faith to get me started on my walk with you, but I often want a sign that you hear me and know me. I will try to find signs from you, as when I was in a frenzy when my key was lost for an entire day. Just when I had given up hope of finding it, I remembered one last place where it could be. Thank you, Lord, for having it be there! You heard me, I wasn't just lucky. I want and need visible signs from you to keep building my connections to you, Lord.

PRAYER:

Lord, help me to recognize a sign today that you are close by.
Señor, ayúdame hoy a reconocer alguna señal hoy día que indique que estás cerca.

ACTION:

Today I will look for a sign from the Lord and thank Him for it.

Dale Labbe-Anhut

TUESDAY, 28TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 16

Ezekiel 47: 1 - 9, 12

John 5: 1 - 16

"I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. (John 5: 7 - 9)

"Señor, no tengo a nadie que me meta en la piscina cuando se mueve el agua. Y mientras trato de ir, ya otro se ha metido." Jesús le dijo: "Levántate, toma tu camilla y anda." Al instante, el hombre sanó, tomó su camilla y empezó a caminar." (Juan 5: 7-9)

REFLECTION:

This passage reminds me that in my life I cannot always rely on others to push me toward salvation and redemption. If you are truly lost and in search of direction, only you can change your destiny. The invalid man lying beside the pool was waiting for someone to "help" him. Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be cured and it was done. When we feel powerless in our lives, it is important to remember that Jesus is always ready to help. All we need to do is ask.

PRAYER:

Jesus, let me never forget that when I feel like no one is available or able to help me, you are always there.
Jesús, nunca déjame olvidar que cuando siento que no hay nadie disponible ó capaz de ayudarme, tú siempre estás allí.

ACTION:

I will remember today that I am never alone. The problems and struggles exist in life and instead of "lying by the pool waiting to be pushed in," I will ask Jesus or others for help.

Bill Bernschein

WEDNESDAY, 29TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 17

Isaiah 49: 8 - 15

John 5: 17 - 30

"...even should she forget, I will never forget you." (Isaiah 49: 15) *"Aun cuando ella se olvide, yo nunca me olvidare de ti." (Isaías 49: 15)*

REFLECTION:

This passage from Isaiah reminds us that despite the possibility that even family members and other loved ones may forget us, God will not. However, in John 5: 24 we are reminded that “He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life.” Thus, our relationship with God must not be a one-way street. God will not forget us, but we must reciprocate by believing in Him, praying and reflecting on Him and what He has done for us. In our busy, modern lives we can easily get caught up in the daily routines, problems, and stresses of the outside world and run the risk of our faith slipping. Consider this: if God will not forget us, why can we not devote more and better quality time reflecting on Him?

PRAYER:

Lord, make me a stronger person who will not let worldly problems and concerns get the best of me. Help me appreciate the love you have for me. Also, on this St. Patrick’s Day, I pray for peace in Northern Ireland.

Señor, fortaleceme como persona que no deje que los problemas y preocupaciones del mundo se apoderan de mi. Ayudame a apreciar el amor que tienes por mi. Tambien en este dia de San Patricio, te pido una oracion de paz para Irlanda Norte.

ACTION:

Today, prior to getting involved in my day-to-day routine, I will reflect on God’s love and the grace He extends. He will not forget me, I must not forget Him. Before attending any St. Patrick’s Day celebrations, we should reflect on the contributions the Irish have made to the Church in America and to our nation as a whole.

Nicholas P. Baric

THURSDAY, 30TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 18**Exodus 32: 7 - 14****John 5: 31 - 47**

“I have come with my Father’s authority, but you have not received me.” (John 5: 43) *‘Yo he venido en nombre de me Padre, yustedes no me aceptan....’ (Juan 5: 43)*

REFLECTION:

Have I received you? What gets in my way? How do I let myself become distracted or self-absorbed and fail to hear your voice?

PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for your everlasting love, which persists even when I am not receptive. Continue to show me the way.

Dios, gracias por tu amor eterno que persiste aun cuando yo no soy receptivo. Continua enseñando me el camino.

ACTION:

Today, I will look for ways to receive you and honor you.

Rita Siebenaler

FRIDAY, 31ST DAY OF LENT, MARCH 19**2 Samuel 7: 4 - 5a, 12 - 14a, 16****Romans 4: 13, 16 - 18, 22**

“Shall you build a house for me to dwell in?” (2 Samuel 7: 5)

“Through the rightness of faith are you to become inheritors of the world.” (Romans 4:13)

“...¿Eres tú quien me construirá una casa para que yo permanezca en ella?” (2 Samuel 7: 5)

“Dios prometió a Abraham, a sus descendientes, que el mundo le pertenecería,...porque tuvo fe en Dios.” (Romanos 4: 13)

REFLECTION:

Faith takes work. I used to think one either was “blessed” with it or cursed with doubt. Now, as I continue to grow and see that the world is not so simple, I begin to understand that having faith takes work. I see today’s readings as God saying to all of us, “continue to build your faith, and pass on your faith.”

PRAYER

Like St. Joseph, whom we celebrate today, may we be builders - builders of faith and love, hope and charity.

Como San José, a quién celebramos hoy, que podamos ser obreros - obreros de fe, amor, esperanza, y caridad.

ACTION:

As an act of faith and grace this weekend, recommit yourself to Christ - do not, though, jealously guard that faith, but rather share it, celebrate it through concrete helpful actions to help your neighbors.

Michael Connelly

SATURDAY, 32ND DAY OF LENT, MARCH 20

Jeremiah 11: 18 - 20

John 7: 40 - 53

“Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?” (John 7: 51)

“Segun nuestra Ley, no podemos condenar a un hombre sin antes haber lo oido para saber qué es lo que ha hecho.” (Juan 7: 51)

REFLECTION:

In this rapid paced world, it seems imperative that all decisions be made swiftly and then move on. There’s never time to sit back and contemplate. This hectic atmosphere leads to looking at something, quickly forming opinions, and living with the results. In many situations, like the speaker (Nicodemus), say to others or yourself, “Stop! We need to look deeper.”

PRAYER:

Grant that I be a thoughtful, fair, and prayerful servant of the Lord.

Concedeme que yo sea atento, justo y un devoto sirviente de Dios.

ACTION:

Starting today, I will not “jump to conclusions” or allow others to do so; rather I will look beyond first impressions for the truth.

Jim Morris

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT, MARCH 21

Ezekiel 37: 12 - 14

Romans 8: 8 - 11

“If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then He who raised Christ from death, will also give life to your mortal bodies by the presence of His Spirit in you.” (Romans 8: 11)

“Y si el Espíritu de aquel que resucitó a Jesús vive en ustedes, el mismo que resucitó a Cristo dará nueva vida a sus cuerpos mortales por medio del Espíritu de Dios que vive en ustedes.” (Romanos 8: 11)

REFLECTION:

This reading gives me hope. “If” (and, for me, that’s always a big IF) I can live in such a way that those around me are aware of the “Spirit of God” in me, then God, in turn, will give life to my mortal body. To know that God can breathe life into me even when I feel like there is no hope - I cannot go one more step - is such an encouraging concept. It’s like finding out that some awful task you have to do (cleaning an oven comes to mind) is going to be shared. You don’t have to do it alone! God is there ready to help our “mortal bodies.” And what we must do in return is live a life that acknowledges God working within us - giving us the breath and energy to do His will in this world. Never an easy task for me, but certainly more hopeful knowing God’s breath is available to me.

PRAYER:

Dear God, help me to understand that all I need do is let you into my life, and You will be with me in all those places I perceive as impossible.

Querido Señor, ayudame a comprender que lo unico que tengo que hacer es dejar que entres en me vida, y tu estarás conmigo en todos ese lugares que me parecen imposibles.

ACTION:

Today, look at the hard places in the day and remember that God will give life to your body in order to get the tasks done. Then, be willing to acknowledge His help to those around you.

Carol Poplin

MONDAY, 34TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 22 Daniel 13: 1 - 9, 15 - 17, 19 - 30, 33 - 62 John 8: 1 - 11

“Let he who is without sin among you cast the first stone.” (John 8: 7) *“El que no tenga pecado lance la primera piedra.” (Juan 8: 7)*

REFLECTION:

We often fall victim to our pride and lie to cover our guilt. We do not reflect how our lie affects others. Daniel (first reading) shows that those who are faithful will be protected, while those who lie will suffer the consequences of their perjury. How often have I used lies to benefit me? Who has suffered because of my perjury? In the reading from John, Jesus challenges us: we must change our pride to humility if we are to remove perjury from our daily lives.

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, guide my words and deeds to always help - not hurt - others.
Espíritu Santo guía mis palabras y acciones para que siempre pueda ayudar y no dañar al prójimo.

ACTION:

I will watch for occasions where pride tempts me to misrepresent the truth, tell a half-turth or outright lie for my benefit at the expense of another and will, instead, put that person’s best interest ahead of mine.

Milt & Eleanor Werthmann

TUESDAY, 35TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 23 Numbers 21: 4 - 9 John 8: 21 - 30

“Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in Him.” (John 8: 30) *“Cuando Jesús dijo esto, muchos creyeron en él.” (Juan 8: 30)*

REFLECTION:

What a comfort the gift of faith has been to me! There have been times in my life when I felt totally abandoned by God, only to realize that it was *I* who had abandoned Him. Each time I called for His help, He would answer me - maybe not in the way I had asked for, but always an answer.

One of my great joys is our Tuesday night group, who meet to read Scriptures and discuss how the readings affect our lives. We are extended family, and when one of us is absent, the group is diminished. We are all aware that our community helps us grow in faith as we love and support each other through prayer.

PRAYER:

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for being with me. Help me remember that You are always at my side to love me, and guide my steps.
Gracias, Señor Jesús, por estar conmigo. Ayúdame a recordar que tu estas siempre conmigo, amandome y guiando mis pasos.

ACTION:

Today I will make the time to be present to those around me, who might be feeling lost and alone.

Betty Anne Hanna

WEDNESDAY, 36TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 24 **Daniel 3: 14 - 20, 91 - 92, 95**

John 8: 31 - 42

“Deliver us in accordance with Thy marvelous works and give glory to Thy name, O Lord! Let all who do harm to Thy servants be put to shame.” (Daniel 3: 20)

“*¡Salvanos conforme a Tus hechos maravillosos y dé gloria a tu nombre, Señor! Que todos los que hacen daño a tus siervos sufren aprobio.*”

REFLECTION:

Often I find myself in situations where I have to make a difficult choice. The choice is between doing something which I know is not to the liking of the Lord, and doing the right thing. What makes the selection difficult is that the first choice is easier to do and could make my image more appealing to my peers. It could also place me in a better position wherein I would be owed favors which could later be financially beneficial to me and my family. The second choice, that of doing the right thing, is often unappealing. It could draw ridicule and criticism for being “impractical” and not “doing the right thing for the security of my family.” It has, at times, caused me to be ostracized and by-passed by people who are deemed “more cooperative.”

The path that Christ laid down for us to follow is, indeed, a difficult one. It is often unrewarding in the worldly sense. I pray that in offering the emotional pains caused by following Christ’s path, I may be part of Christ’s sacrifice for men. I also pray that those who ridicule people for obeying God’s laws will be exposed for their corruption and that their exposure shows others that following God’s laws is the proper path to take.

PRAYER:

Lord, let all men draw inspiration from your suffering. May more men be given the strength to follow the path You laid down for us.

Señor, que toda la humanidad pueda ser inspirada por tu sufrimiento. Que ma’s seres humanos puedan ser dados la fuerza para seguir el camino que tu has trazada para nosotros.

ACTION:

Make a conscious effort to lead a life more pleasing to Christ, keeping in mind, no matter how difficult, that God’s graces have more real value than any earthly reward.

Roberto O. Chan

THURSDAY, 37TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 25

Isaiah 7: 10 - 14; 8: 10

Hebrews 10: 4 - 10

“God, here I am! I have come to do your will.” (Hebrews 10: 7)

“Entonces dije: ‘Aquí estoy, tal como está escrito en mi libro, para hacer tu voluntad, oh Dios!’” (Hebreos 10: 7)

REFLECTION:

I am struck by these words. They speak of total obedience. And “obedience” is not one of my favorite virtues! Leading a virtuous life may not have the same appeal it once had. Nevertheless, I have worked hard to be charitable toward my neighbors (whoever they may be). I believe myself to be just and fair in all my dealings. I keep the faith.

But obedience is one virtue I find difficult to practice. Perhaps it takes a calm and understanding person to always discern God’s will and then keep in line with what God is asking them to do. Discovering God’s will means that I have to ask questions. Sometimes I ask too many questions so that God’s will is once again clouded by doubt. I realize that the better course is to follow through with action once I think I know what God wants of me.

PRAYER:

Lord, help me cherish all the ways you ask me to do your will.

Dios, ayúdame apreciar todas las maneras que tu me pides que haga to voluntad.

ACTION:

Let these days of Lent remind me that obedience comes to those who are humble.

Dan VanBelleghem

FRIDAY, 38TH DAY OF LENT, MARCH 26

Jeremiah 20: 10 - 13

John 10: 31 - 42

“The Lord is with me, like a mighty champion...he has rescued the life of the poor.” (Jeremiah 20: 11, 13)

“Pero Yavé está conmigo, él, mi poderoso defensor; los que me persiguen no me vencerán.” (Jeremías 20: 11)

REFLECTION:

Conflict rages across both readings today. Jeremiah’s so-called friends prepare to pounce and denounce his slightest misstep; Jesus, merely doing His ministry, is threatened by some of the crowd, despite His works and His words. Does this sound familiar?

I think we all feel threatened sometimes, like sailors in stormy seas, whether it’s by our work, this society, even by times our friends act like something quite different. Yet, like Jeremiah and Jesus, we survive because the Lord is our Champion; our safe harbor. He is always there, so we can challenge the world or our friends, and overcome the negativity that seemingly surrounds us. We do that by becoming champions, too, by having faith and doing good works, by making a stand. It’s not always easy pulling out from that safe harbor, but sailors, and Christians, too, have done just that from time immemorial, and our Champion makes us His instrument for bettering our world by doing His works.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, through your Son and the Holy Spirit, give us the courage to “sail” today, serving You by serving others.

Padre Celestial, por medio tu Hijo y el Espíritu Santo, danos hoy el valor de “navegar” sirviendote a traves de sirviendo a otros.

ACTION:

Be someone’s champion today. Let your advocacy, your love, help another find safe haven, comfort and peace.

Tom Ryan

SATURDAY, 39TH DAY OF LENT

MARCH 27

Ezekiel 37: 21 - 28

John 11: 45 - 57

“Nor do you consider that it is better for you that one man should die instead of the people so that the whole nation may not perish.” (John 11: 50)

“Ni se dan cuenta de que es mejor para ustedes que muera un solo hombre por el pueblo, y no que toda la nacion sea destruida.” (Juan 11: 50)

REFLECTION:

How ironic are these prophetic words! Spoken by the high priest Caiaphas, they were directed at the Pharisees, who had assembled to lament the increasing number of Jews following the teachings of Jesus. Caiaphas advises the troubled Pharisees that Jesus’ death would prevent the Romans from taking away both their land and their nation. As stated two verses later, “So from that day on, they planned to kill him.”

When I first read this verse, the original intent of Caiaphas’ advice to the Pharisees was clear. But, on further reflection, I realized that Caiaphas’ prophesy is much more profound. Indeed, it WAS better for the Pharisees - and the nation - for Jesus to die. Jesus’ resurrection accomplished exactly what Caiaphas had intended, which was to prevent the nation from perishing. Yet, the important distinction is that salvation was to occur not from the Romans, but from spiritual death. God worked through Caiaphas to put the pieces in place for a much grander plan, though Caiaphas was clearly unaware of it.

Sometimes, words and actions can have unintended consequences. This reading calls me to reflect upon my interactions with friends, colleagues, and loved ones. Are my intentions honorable and upright? Am I a mirror from which God is reflected to others?

PRAYER:

Lord, let your goodness and love reflect from my words and actions. Help me to be aware of the impact I have on those around me, filling me with tolerance and compassion.

Dios, deja que tu bondad y amor sea reflejado en mis palabras y acciones. Ayudame a estar consciente del impacto que yo tengo sobre los que me rodean, llename de tolerancia y compasión.

ACTION:

I will look in the mirror and see the good that God has created. As I look at others today, I will remember that I am reflecting God’s goodness and love.

DeAndra Beck