

APRIL

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17

18 19 20 21 22

23 24 25 26 27

28 29 30

Saturday, April 1, 2017
(Lec. 249)

- 1) Jeremiah 11:18-20
- 2) John 7:40-53

SATURDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF LENT

FOCUS: Jesus was a gift from our heavenly Father.

Just because something is unlikely does not mean it is impossible. Many people doubted Jesus because of his lowly beginnings. He came from nowhere and no one – at least that is what they thought. Ignoring or underestimating someone because they do not seem worthy of special notice can result in missing out on a true gift.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

We hear in today's first reading that God protected the prophet Jeremiah from those who would stop him from speaking the Lord's message. In the Gospel, there is also a plot to stop God's work. The Pharisees unsuccessfully try to sabotage Jesus, even as Nicodemus, one of their own, speaks up for Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us bring our needs to the Father, trusting in his goodness and love.

- 1) That our Church leaders, through their teaching and example, may continue to help us grow in our efforts to follow Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That government leaders throughout the world may find ways to bridge differences between and among their people so that violence and hatred lose their grip, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer persecution because of their religious beliefs may be kept safe and be assured of God's love for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this parish community may always welcome the stranger, and be the face of Jesus to all whom we meet when we walk out these doors, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may experience everlasting joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Holy God, we bring our prayers to you, confident in your providence and seeking your special blessings. We pray through Christ our Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017

(Lec. 34)

- 1) Ezekiel 37:12-14
- 2) Romans 8:8-11
- 3) John 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

**FIFTH SUNDAY
OF LENT**

FOCUS: Jesus promises that those who believe and follow him will never die.

Today's Gospel recounts Jesus saying, *I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.* These words clearly identify Jesus as the Son of God, the author of life and the one who brings our salvation. The words also give the promise and hope of eternal life in heaven to all who believe in him and persevere in faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Ezekiel, the prophet tells the Israelites that they will know God because he gives them life and frees them from enslavement. Saint Paul explains to the Romans that the life-giving spirit they received through Christ frees them from both sin and death. In the Gospel reading, Jesus proclaims that he is the resurrection and the life and that all who live and believe in him will never die.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, we bring our petitions to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we will continually strive to open ourselves more fully to the Holy Spirit each day so we may continue to grow in faith and have the grace and gifts needed to give a more faithful witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may they seek guidance from God in making decisions that affect the quality of life for all they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel alienated or discouraged, may they find the welcome they long for within the community of the Catholic Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of this parish, may our hearts be open and responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they come to know the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father, we thank you for the gift of the Spirit who gives us life. Hear these prayers, and those held within the silence of our hearts, according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Monday, April 3, 2017
(Lec 251)

MONDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF LENT

- 1) Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62
or 13:41c-62
- 2) John 8:1-11

FOCUS: We must always remember that our all-knowing and all-merciful heavenly Father is also a God of justice.

How often do we judge too quickly, or believe the worst we hear about someone? God once told the prophet, Samuel, that only he sees men's hearts and can judge justly (1 Sm 16:7). The accuser, the devil, tries to convince us that we don't deserve God's forgiveness. Of course, the devil is the prince of liars. No sin is more powerful than God's mercy.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, a young Daniel proves the innocence of a woman accused of adultery by two wicked elders by proving the elders to be liars. Today's Gospel is the story of a woman caught in adultery. When Jesus invites anyone in the crowd who is without sin to cast the first stone at her, the crowd disperses, and Jesus tells the woman to sin no more.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing you are the source of truth and life, we present our prayers of petition.

- 1) For all members of the Church, both clergy and laity, may they be blessed with the grace and strength needed to share Christ's love generously with all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all legislators, may they work to ensure that the dignity and sanctity of human life in all stages is protected and safeguarded, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel unworthy of God's forgiveness, may the vastness of God's mercy be made known to them through the invitation and welcome expressed by Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, may we make a special effort during the remaining days of Lent to open our hearts to hear God's will in our lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our departed friends and family members, may they enjoy perfect peace in the company of the angels and saints in paradise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, in your goodness and mercy we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

Tuesday, April 4, 2017
(Lec 252)

- 1) Numbers 21:4-9
- 2) John 8:21-30

TUESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF LENT
(Opt. Mem. Saint Isidore,
Bishop and Doctor
of the Church)

FOCUS: By placing our faith in Jesus and living according to his teachings, we are given the promise and hope of eternal life.

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches that to receive the gift of salvation, we must place our faith in him and live according to his teachings. If we fail to do so, we face the prospect of eternal separation from God. This teaching reminds us of the importance of renewing our commitment each day to live as disciples of Jesus.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading from the Book of Numbers, God provides healing for the snake-bitten Israelites by having Moses hold up a bronze serpent mounted on a pole. All who look at it are healed. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that those who fail to believe that he is the Son of God and Savior of the world will die in their sins.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that the heavenly Father provides all our needs let us bring our petitions before him.

- 1) That all the faithful will continue to grow in grace and wisdom so as to more fully share the light of God's love with those who live in darkness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders at all levels of government may work to enact legislation which promotes the common good and keeps the needs of the most vulnerable in mind, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer from physical or mental illness may turn to Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician, so as to receive healing, strength and the gift of his peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the prayers and actions engaged in by this faith community make us stronger in faith and more committed to be witnesses of God's mercy in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may enjoy eternal rest and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Compassionate God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your holy will. We offer them with joyful and grateful hearts, through your son, Jesus Christ the Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, April 5, 2017
(Lec 253)

- 1) Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
- 2) John 8:31-42

WEDNESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK OF LENT
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Vincent Ferrer,
Priest)

FOCUS: God gives aid and strength to those who believe in him and follow him.

In striving to live as faithful servants of God, it is inevitable that we will encounter trials. The good news is that God doesn't leave us on our own. Rather, God gives us the grace, gifts and strength we need, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to persevere and endure. God also assigns a guardian angel to guide and protect us so we may walk in God's way of love.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from the Book of Daniel, three followers of God persist in their refusal to worship idols and violate their faith, despite being thrown into a fiery furnace to burn as punishment. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that those who remain in his word will come to know the truth that sets them free from slavery to sin.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Loving God, we now present our needs to you with confidence that you will hear and answer them.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may our efforts in evangelization continue to help build up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they embrace a spirit of cooperation with their neighbors so their actions promote lasting peace among all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who have experienced loss or injury due to natural disasters, may they feel the comfort of God's love, and compassion from people of good will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For parish families, may they strive together to understand God's will for their lives, and seek to model the Holy Family in their love for one another, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to be wrapped in the loving embrace of Jesus for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace needed to lead lives which are holy and pleasing to you. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * *

Thursday, April 6, 2017
(Lec. 254)

THURSDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Genesis 17:3-9
- 2) John 8:51-59

FOCUS: The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

Throughout the course of history, God has entered into covenants with humankind to draw humanity closer to himself and to bring his plan of salvation to fulfillment. The promises made by God in these covenants endure forever. In and through Christ Jesus, God has established a new and everlasting covenant with humanity that offers the gift of salvation to all who place their faith in Jesus.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Genesis, God rewards Abraham's faithfulness, establishing a covenant with him and his descendants throughout the ages. In the Gospel from John, Jesus proclaims that all who keep his word will never die. Jesus' listeners threaten his life after he says to them: *Before Abraham came to be, I AM.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that God lovingly watches over us and hears and answers all our prayers, let us offer him our petitions.

- 1) For the Holy Father, bishops and priests, may they continue to be blessed and strengthened in preaching the Gospel with courage and zeal so many may come to believe and be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders in unstable regions of the world, may they work to uphold the God-given dignity and rights of all their people, including the least among them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are persecuted because of their faith in Christ, that through grace and the power of prayer they may know they are not alone, and they may be strengthened to stand steadfast in faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, may our efforts in faith formation help people of all ages grow in their faith and love for Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be lifted up to enjoy the rewards of eternal life with Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Most gracious and merciful God, hear and answer these prayers that we place before you today. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Friday, April 7, 2017
(Lec. 255)

- 1) Jeremiah 20:10-13
- 2) John 10:31-42

FRIDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK OF LENT
(Opt. Mem.
Saint John Baptist de la Salle,
Priest)

FOCUS: Respond in peace, as Jesus did, when encountering resistance to the Gospel.

Jesus, throughout his public ministry, experienced opposition and insult from others, but never responded in kind. Rather, he sought to overcome the evil before him with good – with loving words and actions. This shines forth most clearly in Jesus' death on the cross, which defeated the power of sin and evil. Let us resolve to follow this example.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Jeremiah places his trust in God to uphold him when his enemies threaten him with violence. Similarly, in the Gospel, Jesus does not use force in response to people who want to stone him, but instead he answers them with his words and good example.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Recognizing that the Lord is our strength and our rock of refuge, let us join in offering him our prayers for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For the Church, may she be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to be a strong witness to the Gospel in lands where she is persecuted, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our civic leaders, may God move their hearts to uphold justice for all people and promote peace among neighbors, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are incarcerated, may they open themselves to Christ, and find in him a constant companion who will give them new life, strength and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may we have the courage to proclaim the Good News, and be Christ's presence in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to join all the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear and answer our prayers according to your most holy and perfect will. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Saturday, April 8, 2017
(Lec. 256)

SATURDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Ezekiel 37:21-28
- 2) John 11:45-56

FOCUS: When God gives us an invitation to grow, all we need to do is respond to him with faith.

Each day, we are invited by God to grow in our faith and love for him – to grow in holiness. This invitation to grow is put forth before us in all of our daily activities. We accept this invitation by seeking to use each moment as an opportunity to serve and glorify God, and to love and serve others. Let's make each moment count.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today, we hear the prophet Ezekiel telling of God's promise to gather the tribes of Israel together so he can renew his covenant with them, dwell among them again and give them renewed blessings. In the Gospel, the Pharisees and chief priests are threatened by Jesus' powerful words and his raising of Lazarus. They see him as a danger to their existence, and to the people of Israel as a whole, and plot to kill him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that God our Father hears and answers our prayers, let us offer our prayers for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For all Church leaders, may they continue to be sources of inspiration to those seeking to grow in their understanding of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who have not heard the Gospel, may the outreach and witness of faithful Christians help lead many to believe in the good news of salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who have been affected by violence, may they feel the healing touch of Jesus, and find strength in the loving and prayerful support of family and friends, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all liturgical ministers of our parish as they prepare for Holy Week, may they find joy in sharing their gifts to celebrate the Lord's love for us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they live in God's loving embrace forever in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, look with kindness upon our prayers today. Hear these humble petitions, for we ask them in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2017

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

Procession with Palms: (Lec.37)

- 1) Matthew 21:1-11

Mass Readings: (Lec.38)

- 1) Isaiah 50:4-7
- 2) Philippians 2:6-11
- 3) Matthew 26:14–27:66 or 27:11-54

FOCUS: Embracing the cross of Jesus leads to everlasting life.

The cross of shame in Jesus' time has become for us the sign of victory over sin and death. Through his perfect sacrifice of love on the cross, Jesus won forgiveness for our sins and defeated the power of sin and evil. By so doing, Jesus transformed the cross from an instrument of death into the tree of life and source of our salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

We experience all kinds of emotions in today's readings. The joyous crowd becomes an angry and vengeful crowd. Jesus' disciples betray, deny or run away from him. The women, however, remain strong even though their hearts are being torn out. The heavens weep as Jesus empties himself out, obedient to the point of death – death on a cross.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In awe and wonder of the infinite recesses of God's love for us, which shines forth in Christ's perfect sacrifice of love on the cross, we bring our needs before the Lord.

- 1) For Pope Francis, and all the clergy and faithful, as we walk the way of Jesus this week, may we ponder the paschal mystery with new purpose and intent, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civil leaders, may they govern with wisdom and humility, always respecting the rights of all those they govern, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who find life burdensome, may they turn to the one crucified for all and know his consolation and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all those involved in healing professions or hospice care in our parish, may their gentle touch and knowledge bring comfort to their patients, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those near death, may the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus lead them to eternal glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father of the crucified one, hear our humble prayers and lead us to the joy of your eternal presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Monday, April 10, 2017
(Lec. 257)

MONDAY OF
HOLY WEEK

- 1) Isaiah 42:1-7
- 2) John 12:1-11

FOCUS: By humbly serving the needs of others, our lives can become a healing balm that brings hope and healing to others.

Holy Week invites us to enter more deeply into the heart of the paschal mystery so that our lives may be more intimately joined to and patterned after Jesus. Mary's action of anointing Jesus' feet with oil as a sign of her love challenges us to pour ourselves out in humble service to others, allowing our lives to be a healing balm which helps to bring hope and healing to others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The prophet Isaiah speaks of a servant of God who will bring forth justice on the earth. In John's Gospel, Passover draws near and Jesus visits Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Mary anoints Jesus' feet with perfumed oil and dries them with her hair, foreshadowing his burial.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence in God's justice and mercy, we place our petitions before him.

- 1) For the Church, that we will work for justice for the poor, sick and imprisoned in every nation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who manage charitable organizations, that they may be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to them as they work to improve the conditions of the poor, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unemployed and underemployed, may they be successful in finding work that allows them to provide for themselves and those who depend upon them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For a spirit of Christian hospitality in our homes, that we may welcome strangers as we would welcome Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead, that they may be with Christ in paradise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty Father, hear and answer the prayers offered by your humble servants. We offer them to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, April 11, 2017
(Lec. 258)

TUESDAY OF
HOLY WEEK

- 1) Isaiah 49:1-6
- 2) John 13:21-33, 36-38

FOCUS: In humble obedience to the will of his Father, Jesus freely chose to die on the cross to win our salvation.

During the Last Supper, Jesus lovingly tries to prepare the disciples for the trials to come. Despite all they have heard and seen, the disciples still seemed unable to understand that Jesus had to die to save them and the world. Holy Week gives us an opportunity to step away from life's distractions to remember God's great love for us, and the price Christ paid to win our salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Isaiah speaks of God's servant, who will be a *light to the nations* and who will bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth. The Gospel shows a troubled Jesus reclining with the Twelve at table. The Lord foretells of his betrayal by one of them, and the beloved disciple leans back into Jesus in order to listen and understand. Peter proclaims his loyalty, though Jesus knows Peter will deny him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us join in offering our prayers and petitions to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to minister with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of our nation, may they strive to help bring peace to war-torn areas of the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who must flee their homeland, may they find safety and welcome in a new land, and be comforted by the efforts of many helping hands, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here, called by the Lord to serve as a light to the world, may we work diligently to share God's love with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they come to enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: O God, you are our strength and hope. Hear our prayers and open our hearts to understand your word. We ask through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, April 12, 2017
(Lec. 259)

WEDNESDAY OF
HOLY WEEK

- 1) Isaiah 50:4-9a
- 2) Matthew 26:14-25

FOCUS: The Lord is our help: despite the doubts and challenges we face, we trust that he is with us.

Holy Week invites us to enter more deeply into Christ's passion and death on the cross, which won forgiveness for our sins and defeated the power of sin and evil. The more we do this, the more we are able to trust that no matter how much wrong we experience in the world around us, there is no reason to despair for Christ has won the victory over the evil one.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Isaiah speaks of God's suffering servant, who does not resist rejection by the world, but remains confident in God's faithfulness. The Gospel recounts Judas making arrangements to betray Jesus, and Jesus predicts during the Last Supper that one of the Twelve would betray him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us offer our prayers to our loving Father, who hears the cries of the weary and answers them.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may have the courage to proclaim Christ's love to those who have not yet come to believe the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of all nations, may they turn to God for guidance and wisdom so they may resolve conflicts nonviolently, and so peace may reign more fully upon the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor, that they may know God's love for them through the compassionate acts of his people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may we strive to model Christ's love in our daily lives so our example helps build up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, that they may receive a place at the eternal banquet in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father, hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you with humility and gratitude, through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * *

Thursday, April 13, 2017
(Lec. 39)

**THURSDAY OF
HOLY WEEK
(HOLY THURSDAY)**

- 1) Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
- 2) 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- 3) John 13:1-15

FOCUS: The teaching and example of Jesus call us to pour ourselves out in humble love and service to others.

Throughout the whole of his life, Jesus poured himself out in humble love and service to others. We are given a good example of this in the Gospel, which recalls Jesus during the Last Supper washing the feet of his disciples. Mindful of this may we, nourished and strengthened by prayer, word and sacrament, strive to follow Jesus' example through serving the needs of others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Exodus recalls the installation of the feast of Passover. The second reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians recalls Jesus' institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. In the Gospel, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. After he does this he instructs them, *If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet.*

THE WASHING OF THE FEET (Optional Comment)

This symbolic action is a visual reminder of Christ's *mandatum* to humble service. As the ritual takes place, we are asked to recommit ourselves to lives of loving service.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us call to mind our needs, and present them to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For the leaders of the Church, may their humility and faithfulness to the Gospel help inspire others to place their faith and trust in God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all government leaders, may they embrace their role as servant leaders, and strive to bring about the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are estranged from family members, may they seek guidance and strength from the Holy Spirit and begin to work toward reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our faith community who are discerning a vocation to priesthood or religious life, may we prayerfully support them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they experience the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your goodness and love, hear and answer our prayers, which we offer you in the name of your son, Jesus.

PRESENTATION OF THE OILS (*Optional text may be spoken as each oil is presented.*)

The Oil of the Sick is used for the healing of body and spirit. It calls to mind the command of Jesus to his disciples to *cure every disease and illness* (Mt. 10:1). Our prayer is that all who are anointed with this oil will truly be *saved and raised up* to health, in and through Christ Jesus.

The Oil of the Catechumens is used in ceremonies for the baptism of infants and for our adult catechumens. We are invited to reflect on the power of Christ who transforms us into new creatures and sets us free from the power of Satan.

Behold the Sacred Chrism, consecrated by our bishop earlier today. It is a mixture of olive oil and perfume and is used in baptism, in confirmation, and in ordinations. This chrism is also used in the consecration of churches, sacred items, and vessels.

TRANSFER OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

After the Last Supper, Jesus led his Apostles to a quiet place of prayer. Our personal vigil with Christ begins now as we honor the Blessed Sacrament. Following age-old tradition, the table of celebration will be cleared in preparation for the service of the Lord's Passion. The starkness of the sanctuary should impress upon us that Jesus emptied himself totally for us on Good Friday, only to fill us with his blessed joy on Easter morning.

* * *

Friday, April 14, 2017
(Lec. 40)

- 1) Isaiah 52:13–53:12
- 2) Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
- 3) John 18:1–19:42

**FRIDAY
OF THE PASSION
OF THE LORD
(GOOD FRIDAY)**

FOCUS: We have received the gift of eternal life because Jesus was obedient to the will of the Father.

Today's celebration of Good Friday invites us to solemnly reflect on the passion and death of our Lord. In perfect obedience to the will of his Father and out of love for us, he freely chose to die upon the cross to win forgiveness for our sins and to defeat the power of sin and evil. May we always be grateful and ever-mindful of the price Jesus paid to win our salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Isaiah tells of the suffering servant of the Lord, who will suffer and die to bring salvation. The second reading reminds us that Jesus is the great high priest in heaven who intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father. Today's Gospel recounts the passion and death of our Lord.

VENERATION OF THE CROSS

As Catholics, we revere the cross; our crucifixes bear the image of Christ crucified. With this powerful image, we can be moved to join our own sufferings to his and, in this way, help further the salvation of the world. In the love of God for humanity manifested by the cross, we can find ultimate meaning in both the joys and sorrows of life.

HOLY COMMUNION

In venerating the cross with a touch or kiss, we humbly recognized the cross as the tree of life. Now, as we come forward to receive holy Communion, we are fed by bread from heaven, the Lord himself, so that we may continue to grow in our faith and conform our lives to his.

* * *

Saturday, April 15, 2017
(Lec. 41)

**HOLY SATURDAY
- EASTER VIGIL**

FOCUS: Alleluia! Christ is risen! Sin and death are conquered. Let us rejoice!

On this holy night, our thoughts may drift over our past forty-day journey from *ashes to ashes*. We began on a Wednesday when we were signed with ashes and told to *repent*. Tonight, we see the ashes of the Easter fire as we rejoice and profess our belief in the risen Lord. For it is *through Him, and with Him, and in Him* that we can gain eternal life in heaven. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

I. SERVICE OF LIGHT

Jesus is the Light of the World. As we begin our vigil, we seek his light – the light that dispels the darkness of sin. This is represented as we bless and light the Easter candle, then walk in a procession and proclaim Christ as our Light.

II. LITURGY OF THE WORD

Nine readings are assigned to the Easter Vigil: seven from the Old Testament, and two from the New. If circumstances demand in individual cases, the number of prescribed readings may be reduced. Three selections from the Old Testament, both from the Law and Prophets, should be read before the Epistle and Gospel. In any case, the reading from Exodus about the escape through the Red Sea (reading 3) should never be omitted.

1) Genesis 1:1–2:2 or 1:1, 26-31a

God's countless acts of creation bring into existence that which does not yet exist. In the creation account from the Book of Genesis, *God said*, 'Let there be light...' and it happened. Thus, we see the awesome power of our Creator in the world.

2) Genesis 22:1-18 or 22:1-2,9a, 10-13, 15-18

Abraham's faith in God was put to the supreme test. That a father would be willing to offer his only son as a sacrifice is unthinkable, yet, that is what God did for us.

3) Exodus 14:15–15:1

Water brings both life and death in this Scripture reading. Through the waters of the Red Sea, the Israelites were brought to freedom and to new life, yet the Egyptians drowned in that same water. As Christians, we are brought to new life in the waters of baptism.

4) Isaiah 54:5-14

God called the Israelites to return to him and accept his generous and unconditional love. God once again reaffirms his promise to remain faithful to his covenant with Israel.

5) Isaiah 55:1-11

We can all partake of the life-giving waters and sumptuous meal that God offers to us. God invites the faithful to come to the feast; come and delight in the riches of the Lord.

6) Baruch 3:9-15, 32–4:4

God's generosity toward Israel was immeasurable. God gave Israel prudence so that its people would be able to choose right from wrong, wisdom from folly, and life over death.

7) Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28

God poured out clean water over the house of Israel for the sake of his holy name, even though they had profaned it. God's holiness is shown forth, once again, by the renewal of his covenant with Israel.

New Testament Readings

- 8) Romans 6:3-11
- 9) Matthew 28:1-10

In the reading from Romans, Paul declares that through baptism we share in Christ's death and resurrection and are no longer slaves to sin: *We too might live in newness of life*. The Gospel is Matthew's telling of the resurrection. There is an earthquake, the women are stunned, the guards are afraid. Jesus, himself, says, *Do not be afraid*.

III. LITURGY OF BAPTISM

Through the waters of baptism, we joined to Christ in his death so that we can rise with him to new life. In confirmation, we are marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit, as we are anointed with the oil of chrism. Our initiation is complete as we become partakers in the sacred meal of the body and blood of Christ.

IV. UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Washed clean by the waters of baptism and signed with the seal of the Holy Spirit, let us offer our prayers to God our Father.

- 1) That we, the Church, may fan the flames of tonight's Easter fire and live our faith in true humility and pure love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That on this holy night, may the hearts of every nation and people burst with energy from the light of Christ and inspire them to walk with him *in newness of life*, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those whose lives are torn by guilt and regret may find hope and peace in the risen Lord this night, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That those who have received the Easter sacraments, their sponsors, and our faith community may continue growing in the love of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died with their hope fixed on Christ's victory over death may live forever in his peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of grace and glory, we rejoice as we celebrate the mystery of salvation and thank you for all our gifts and blessings, through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017

(Lec. 42)

- 1) Acts 10:34a, 37-43
- 2) Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
- 3) John 20:1-9
or Matthew 28:1-10 (Lec. 41)
or Luke 24: 13-35 (Lec. 46)

**EASTER SUNDAY
OF THE RESURRECTION
OF THE LORD
- SOLEMNITY**

FOCUS: Alleluia! Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, has risen – let us rejoice and be glad.

Today, and for the next fifty days, we will celebrate and rejoice in the triumph of Christ over the power of death. It is our primary and foundational Christian feast. Through it, the course of human history is changed forever as Christ has, in the words of the Exsultet, broken “the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the underworld.”

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of how Peter, after encountering the risen Lord Jesus and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, is enabled to boldly preach the Gospel message. The second reading reminds us that our lives can be transformed by opening ourselves to the power of the risen Lord Jesus. The Gospel recounts Mary of Magdala going to the tomb of Jesus only to find it empty.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to live more fully in the power of the Resurrection, let us offer our prayers to God the almighty Father.

- 1) For the Church, as the body of Christ on earth, may she faithfully and courageously proclaim the truth of his resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all who were received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, may they continue to grow in holiness of life and always be open to the fullness of life offered by the risen Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick and the dying, may their belief in the Resurrection give them strength and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those gathered here today, may our belief in the love and forgiveness of God inspire us to seek peace and reconciliation in our families and communities, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died marked with the sign of faith, may they come to share in the fullness of eternal life in the risen Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, your son, Jesus Christ, has won victory over sin and death. As we celebrate his victory on this Easter Day, we ask you to hear our prayers and to draw us ever closer to you. We ask this through Christ, our risen Lord.

Monday, April 17, 2017
(Lec. 261)

- 1) Acts 2:14, 22-33
- 2) Matthew 28:8-15

MONDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Daily prayer and hearts that are open to the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit are essential for growing in holiness.

The Apostles, after witnessing Jesus' resurrection and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, were changed and transformed. They were empowered to boldly preach and teach the Gospel. Similarly, we can be transformed so that we may give a more faithful witness to the Gospel by praying daily and having hearts that are open to the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, we hear how Jesus is proclaimed as part of God's saving plan. The Gospel recounts how Jesus reached out to the disciples after he had risen, verifying the truth of his resurrection.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that God is our rock and refuge, let us join in offering our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we continue to seek grace and wisdom from the Holy Spirit in order to live in the light of God's love and spread the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they serve those they govern with compassion and justice, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick, that they will find comfort and healing through the care of medical professionals and compassionate Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For parish families, may they be ever-willing to forgive so that all family members may live in greater love and unity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, with trust and thanksgiving, please answer our prayers according to your will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, April 18, 2017
(Lec. 262)

- 1) Acts 2:36-41
- 2) John 20:11-18

TUESDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: In this Easter season, we rejoice in the truth that Jesus is risen, and we recommit ourselves to Christian discipleship.

Today's readings challenge us to live as the early Christians did – with a fervent desire to repent and live out the call that flows from our baptism to give witness to the Gospel. Strengthened by the sacraments, let us ask for the courage we need to share the good news of salvation with others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Peter tells the people to repent and be baptized, and they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Today's Gospel is the account of the appearance of the risen Lord to Mary of Magdala. Mary is transformed by her encounter at the tomb, and goes forward as instructed by Jesus to announce to the disciples that she had seen the risen Lord Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As an Easter people, we pray confidently to our loving God, who keeps his promises.

- 1) For Pope Francis, bishops, priests, deacons, and all who teach the Catholic faith, that their lives may reflect the good news of the risen Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they serve with humility, always seeking to put the needs of those they serve above self-interest, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who live in poverty, may they be blessed with the support and assistance needed to provide for their basic needs, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, may we faithfully and joyfully witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, whose faith is known to God alone, may they enjoy the fullness of life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, you are the source of all good things. We ask that you hear and answer our prayers and help us share the Good News. Through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, April 19, 2017
(Lec. 263)

- 1) Acts 3:1-10
- 2) Luke 24:13-35

WEDNESDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God often comes to us in the unexpected circumstance.

Today's readings remind us that God is not predictable. He can come to us in situations that are out of the ordinary. We need to be open to encountering him and his blessings at all times, and often in ways we do not expect.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's readings reveal a God who knows us and comes to us in our particular needs. In the reading from Acts, the crippled man expects something from Peter and John, but is amazed at the gift he receives. In Luke's Gospel, the two disciples fail to recognize Jesus. But in the breaking of the bread, their eyes are opened and they can't wait to tell the other disciples that he lives.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to give glory to God in all we say and do, let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to the Lord.

- 1) That the Church will continue to stand confident and firm in proclaiming God's saving power, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That our public leaders may strive to serve with wisdom and integrity, and choose peaceful solutions over conflict and division, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are struggling with their faith may turn to the Holy Spirit for the guidance and strength needed to persevere and resolve their difficulties, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the lonely and suffering will find care and support from members of our faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may enjoy perfect happiness with all the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, hear our prayers and continue to watch over and guide us along the path of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Thursday, April 20, 2017
(Lec. 264)

- 1) Acts 3:11-26
- 2) Luke 24:35-48

THURSDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit provides the fortitude we need to proclaim the Resurrection in our words and deeds.

We are called as disciples of Jesus to lead our lives in accord with his teachings. This often isn't easy because of the demands of everyday life, and the pressures of our world. In order to stand strong and steadfast, it is imperative that we pray to the Holy Spirit each day for strength and wisdom.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Acts, Peter proclaims that the healing of the crippled man was the work of God, not the Apostles. In the Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples and eats with them, and then charges them with proclaiming their belief in his resurrection and saving power.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us now offer our prayers to our heavenly Father, trusting that they will be heard and answered.

- 1) That the Church and her leaders will continue to be blessed with the grace and strength to proclaim the truth of the resurrected Christ to the world in both word and deed, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That world leaders work to build bridges of peace between nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are persecuted for their faith in Christ may be filled with courage and hope by the power of the resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That members of our parish community may pray to the Holy Spirit for wisdom and fortitude so we may better proclaim God's word, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That the faithful departed may come to enjoy the promised reward of eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Eternal Father, in your infinite kindness, please grant our prayer intentions, both spoken and held in the silence of our hearts, according to your will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Friday, April 21, 2017
(Lec. 265)

- 1) Acts 4:1-12
- 2) John 21:1-14

FRIDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit in the first reading, gives a powerful testimony to the victory won by Christ, and to the fact that Jesus' heavenly authority far surpasses any earthly authority. He also proclaims that it is through Jesus, and Jesus alone, that one comes to receive God's gift of salvation. Each day, let us give thanks to God for this great gift and seek to lead lives which give him glory.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, Peter speaks for all the disciples, defending their belief in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and confirming that salvation is through Christ alone. In the Gospel passage, Jesus appears on the shore of the Sea of Galilee while the disciples are fishing, and directs them where to cast their nets. Later, he breaks bread with them, recalling the Eucharist.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing we need only seek and we will find, knock and the door will be opened, we look to our heavenly Father to hear and answer the petitions we offer today.

- 1) For all church leaders, that they may continue to turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength so they may spread the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they work diligently to solve the inequalities and tensions in their nations that lead to unrest and acts of terrorism, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the terminally ill, that they may find hope and promise in the joy of the Resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our parish community who have entered the Church through the sacraments of baptism, Eucharist and confirmation during this Easter season, may they be always open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they rejoice with the angels and saints in heaven with the risen Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the many gifts you have given us and ask for your mercy, through Christ our Lord.

Saturday, April 22, 2017
(Lec. 266)

- 1) Acts 4:13-21
- 2) Mark 16:9-15

SATURDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Stay close to Jesus in prayer.

The disciples did not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until they encountered him in person. Only then were they able to go into the world to proclaim the Gospel. Although we are not able to see Jesus face-to-face like the first disciples, we encounter him in prayer and through the sacraments so our faith can grow strong and shine as a clear witness to those around us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter and John are brought before the Jewish leaders to explain the healing of a beggar. Although they are warned not to speak in Jesus' name, they reply that it would be impossible not to. In the Gospel, Jesus sends the Apostles into the world to proclaim the Gospel after appearing to several followers.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to live more fully in the power and promise of the Resurrection, let us lift our petitions to God in confidence.

- 1) For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, that his example of pastoral love and humility of heart will continue to help shepherd and guide lost souls to Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For an end to conflict in the Middle East and other war-torn areas of the world, may these nations beat their swords into plowshares, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer from addictions, that they may receive the help and support they need to bring about healing and recovery, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the youth in our parish community, that their lives may be grounded in the Gospel and their love for God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be given a place at the heavenly banquet, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2017

(Lec. 43)

- 1) Acts 2:42-47
- 2) 1 Peter 1:3-9
- 3) John 20:19-31

**SECOND SUNDAY
OF EASTER or
DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**

FOCUS: Showing love and mercy to one another is a way of showing gratitude to God for his mercy toward us.

If Easter needs an exclamation point, Divine Mercy Sunday provides it. The death and resurrection of Jesus reveal the depths of God's mercy toward us. For by his death, Jesus won forgiveness for our sins and by rising, restored our life. In gratitude for all that we have received from God, let us go forth and treat one another with kindness and mercy.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading speaks of the early Christians living in community and showing great concern for one another. The Church grew as the Lord blessed their work. The second reading highlights the blessings of following Christ, even in times of trial. In the Gospel, the risen Jesus appears to the Apostles and sends them out to forgive sins and bring people to salvation.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Raised up to a newer and fuller life in Christ Jesus, let us come together to offer our petitions to him.

- 1) That God's mercy, poured out in and through Christ Jesus, may move all members of our Church, both clergy and laity, to be merciful and forgiving to others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders around the world will work to protect the most vulnerable in their midst, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer from chronic pain may find relief and solace through the compassion of their caregivers and the ever-constant love of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us gathered here may be aware of God's mercy in our lives and acknowledge it gratefully, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may rest in peace eternally, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers. Help us to know your mercy and goodness as we strive to follow the example of Jesus. We ask these and all things through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Monday, April 24, 2017
(Lec. 267)

- 1) Acts 4:23-31
- 2) John 3:1-8

MONDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER

(Opt. Mem.
Saint Fidelis of Sigmaringen,
Priest and Martyr)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit will empower those who believe in the power of God.

The Holy Spirit gives us the courage to speak the word of God with confidence. Not all the teachings of Christ are easy to understand, so it is the Holy Spirit who gives us wisdom and sheds light on these difficult teachings. We must pray daily and be open to the promptings of the Spirit at all times.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the community of believers were overjoyed that Peter and John had prevailed against the Sanhedrin, and prayed that God would continue to enable them to speak his word. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that a person must be born anew by water and the Holy Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in his loving mercy, we turn to our heavenly Father in prayer, presenting our needs and the needs of others.

- 1) For our Holy Father, that the Holy Spirit will continue to bless him with the grace and gifts needed to shepherd and guide the faithful in growing in holiness of life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they seek peaceful solutions to the persistent problems that plague our world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor and unemployed, that they may find strength in their faith and be blessed with the assistance they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the sick, may they turn to Christ, the Divine Physician, for healing and strength, and be aided and comforted by those who care for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may be judged worthy of entering into eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, giver of all good gifts, hear and answer our prayers according to your most holy will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, April 25, 2017
(Lec. 555)

- 1) Peter 5:5b-14
- 2) Mark 16:15-20

**SAINT MARK,
EVANGELIST
- FEAST**

FOCUS: If we trust in God and follow his teachings, we will be saved.

Like the Apostles in today's Gospel, Saint Mark went out into the world to evangelize – to proclaim the Good News of the risen Christ – and he was met with both acceptance and resistance. Ultimately, we all have a choice between belief and unbelief, a choice to live with Christ through faith or to dwell in the darkness of sin.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, we are encouraged that, in spite of our human sufferings, God bestows on us the gift of faith and strengthens us with his grace so we live with humility and resist the power of evil. In the Gospel, Jesus charges the Apostles to proclaim his word to all people. We are reminded that all who believe and are baptized are charged with this same mission.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence that God will hear us, we humbly offer him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may be tireless in our determination to spread the word of God to all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all who serve in positions of leadership, that they might realize the power of their words and actions to set a course for peace and prosperity in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who dwell in the darkness of sin or unbelief, that they may open their hearts and minds to the light of Christ so they may be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each one of us, that we may remain firm in faith and strive to share the love of Christ with all whom we encounter, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, that they may live in the light of God's eternal kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, you bestow your favor on the humble. Hear the prayers we offer you with humility, and strengthen us with your grace. Through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, April 26, 2017
(Lec. 269)

- 1) Acts 5:17-26
- 2) John 3:16-21

WEDNESDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God the Father sent his son, Jesus, into the world so that all who believe might have eternal life.

Today's Gospel reminds us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life. Let us ponder these words and allow them to penetrate our hearts so we never take for granted God's gift of salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Apostles face trial for spreading the truth that Jesus is God. They are freed from prison by an angel of the Lord, who commissioned them: *take your place in the temple area* in order to continue the mission. In the Gospel, we hear a fundamental truth of our faith – that Jesus is the Son of God, sent so that *the world might be saved through him*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With humble hearts, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For missionaries in the Church, that they will be blessed with the grace and strength needed to continue courageously preaching and teaching the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in public office, may they be strengthened in their call to meet the needs of those whom they serve in truth and integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world who are persecuted for their faith, may they stay true to the Gospel message and remain steadfast in their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may we seek to alleviate suffering and poverty in the community around us by performing corporal acts of mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they come to enjoy the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Thursday, April 27, 2017
(Lec. 270)

- 1) Acts 5:27-33
- 2) John 3:31-36

THURSDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

God graciously gifts his people with love and compassion. And he is generous with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us, through our words and actions, strive to proclaim the blessings we have been given by our merciful God, and let the Holy Spirit work through us to help build up the kingdom of God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of the Apostles continuing to preach in spite of warnings from the Jewish leaders. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that whoever believes in him will have eternal life, and that whoever does not believe and obey him will not enter into eternal life.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith and hope in our hearts, let us ask God, who is the giver of all good things, to hear our prayers.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to be graced with the strength to spread the Gospel to those who have yet to hear and believe, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to promote nonviolent solutions to problems so that peace may reign more fully upon the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the chronically ill, may they be comforted by the support of loved ones and know God's healing love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For parish families, may they strive to model the love and devotion of the Holy Family, and share that love with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear the prayers we bring to you this day. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Friday, April 28, 2017
(Lec. 271)

- 1) Acts 5:34-42
- 2) John 6:1-15

FRIDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Peter Chanel,
Priest and Martyr;
Saint Louis Grignon de Montfort,
Priest)

FOCUS: The Lord Jesus provides food and drink for those who hunger and thirst.

The Lord wants to provide for all we need. Jesus shows us this when he provides food for the large crowd who was following him. In this miracle, which is found in all four Gospels, we see that Jesus took the loaves, *gave thanks* and then distributed the bread. With this in mind, let us remember the gift of Jesus we are given in the Eucharist.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, one of the Pharisees urged the release of the Apostles who had been detained. After being punished, the Apostles continued to preach the Good News of the Lord. In the Gospel, Jesus feeds a large crowd with five loaves of barley and two fish. This brought the people in the crowd to say: *This is truly the Prophet.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in God's providence, let us bring forth our petitions for our Church and for our world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we strive to be constant and persistent in our prayer, drawing ever closer to Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of leadership, may they turn to God for guidance and the courage they need to lead with integrity and honesty, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who do not have enough food for themselves and their families, may they be assisted by the outreach and helping hands of many, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who were received into the Church at Easter, may they feel truly welcomed by this faith community, and be inspired to witness to Christ always, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perpetual light, happiness and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace needed to lead lives which are holy and pleasing to you. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * *

Saturday, April 29, 2017
(Lec. 272)

- 1) Acts 6:1-7
- 2) John 6:16-21

SATURDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER
(OBL MEM)

Saint Catherine of Siena,
Virgin and Doctor of the Church

FOCUS: Just as Jesus came to the aid of the disciples when they were in danger at sea, he will help us through our times of trouble.

When we are going through a rough time in life, assailed by troubles and trials, we can look to Jesus. He promised to be with us always. Just as he told the Apostles today, *Do not be afraid*, so we must turn to Jesus to give us the courage and perseverance to endure.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles relates how seven men (now called deacons) were chosen to oversee the food distribution so that Gentile widows would not be neglected. Today's Gospel tells of how the disciples, while crossing the sea in the dark, became afraid when they saw Jesus walking on the sea. Jesus responds to calm their fears, saying, *It is I. Do not be afraid.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust that God hears and answers our prayers, let us offer him our petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church be faithful witnesses to God's goodness and love, and reflect it through our words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That government leaders throughout the world not be driven by a desire for power or privilege, but rather work to serve their people with humility and sincerity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That people who are suffering through difficult times may find strength, hope and solace in their faith, and be uplifted by the outreach of others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this parish may always welcome the stranger and be attentive to those in our midst who are hurting and in need of our support, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may come to join all the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious Father, generously provide for all our needs. In your mercy, hear and answer our prayers through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2017

(Lec. 46)

- 1) Acts 2:14, 22-33
- 2) 1 Peter 1:17-21
- 3) Luke 24:13-35

**THIRD SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: Scripture confirms Jesus' identity as the only Begotten Son of God.

To appreciate who Jesus is in God's plan of salvation, we must look to the Hebrew Scriptures – the written word of God fulfilled by Jesus, the Word of God become flesh. With gratitude and the deepest of appreciation that we have been redeemed by Jesus, the *spotless unblemished lamb*, let us strive to build up the kingdom of God on earth each day by living as faithful disciples of Jesus.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts recounts Peter explaining to the crowd that Jesus is the Messiah promised by God, sitting on David's throne. In the second reading, we are reminded that Jesus is the lamb whose *precious blood* has ransomed us from sin. In the Gospel, Jesus reveals himself to two disciples who were traveling to Emmaus *in the breaking of the bread*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Exultant with Easter joy, let us offer our heavenly Father our petitions for ourselves and our world.

- 1) For the faithful throughout the world, that we might be a sign to those we encounter of the living Christ and his sacrificial love for all of us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our elected officials, that they might embrace their role as servant leaders and strive to work for the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are sick, may God restore them to the fullness of life and health, and liberate them from all that afflicts them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who were received into the Church at Easter, that they might remain open to the many ways that Jesus manifests himself in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy the fullness of life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, hear and answer our prayers and grant us the grace needed to keep our feet firmly planted on the path to life. We ask this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * *