

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent

March 1, 2020

Genesis 2:7-9; 18-23; 3:1-7

Day One: Genesis 2:7-9

Reflection question: What does it mean to you that God created Eden for Adam and personally places him in the garden?

Day Two: Genesis 2:18-23

Reflection Question: What does it say about God that he created companions for Adam?

Day Three: Genesis 3:1-4

Reflection Question: When have you been tempted by the ‘forbidden fruit’? What helped you resist?

Day Four: Genesis 3:5-7

Reflection question: The serpent tempts Eve that they will be ‘like gods’ if they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What temptation to become like a god do you face today? What have been your struggles to resist, or consequences if you fell prey to this temptation?

Day Five: Genesis 2:7-9; 18-23; 3:1-7

Reflection question: As you read the entire passage today, do you hear God speak to you? Did you find him looking directly at you?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

“Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there.”—Guigo II, the Carthusian (ca. 1113-1193)

Read the day’s passage once, slowly:

Take 2-3 minutes to ponder the passage. Note any phrase, word or image that stands out for you.

Read the passage a second time slowly:

Take a few minutes to ponder the passage again. Stay with the text: Why do you think the words or image stand out the first time? Is your mind drawn to another part of the text?

What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

Pray

1. Take a few minutes to be still and present to God.
2. Share your thoughts, questions with God.
3. Is God “speaking” to you? Remember: it may not be a voice you hear but a nudge, a consolation or an insight. If you are keeping a journal, you may want to write these down.
4. When you feel done, say a quick prayer thanking God for this time with him.

Optional Small group session to follow these daily reflections:

Pray the following prayer or one in your own words:

“Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there.” —Guigo II, the Carthusian (d.1297)

Allow each person to reflect silently upon their encounters with the Word this past week. They may wish to review any notes or journaling they did at that time.

Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does he speak, or communicate in another way?
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

- Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

396 God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. A spiritual creature, man can live this friendship only in free submission to God. The prohibition against eating “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” spells this out: “for in the day that you eat of it, you shall die.” The “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” symbolically evokes the insurmountable limits that man, being a creature, must freely recognize and respect with trust. Man is dependent on his Creator, and subject to the laws of creation and to the moral norms that govern the use of freedom.

Reflection questions:

- What does it mean to you that God created you to be in friendship with him?
- What does it mean to you that God gave you the freedom to choose between good and evil?

Discuss

Allow each person to share what they encountered in their prayers this past week. They can respond to any question from their daily reflection or this session, or share an insight or experience that rose out of their prayer.

As the discussion draws to a close, ask if there are any needs members would like the group to pray for. If it is possible, at this time move to a chapel or the church for the closing prayer.

Pray

- Allow a time of silent prayer, allowing each person to offer their own silent prayers of praise thanksgiving, and petition to the Lord.
- Allow additional time to sit in the Lord’s presence.
- If possible and appropriate, allow each person to offer any prayers aloud.
- Close with prayer as is the custom of your community. It could be: a spontaneous prayer, a parish prayer for renewal said together, an Our Father, Glory Be or prayer to the patron saint of the parish asking his/her intercession, etc.

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel for the Second Sunday of Lent

March 8, 2020

Matthew 17:1-9

Day One: Matthew 17:1-2

Reflection question: Suppose Jesus took you, along with Peter, James and John, up the mountain. What would have gone through your mind? What might you be desiring to pray for, or wanting to see?

Day Two: Matthew 17:3-4

Reflection Question: The disciples awake to find Jesus talking to Moses and Elijah. Have you been suddenly startled to find Jesus in your midst? What was that like?

Day Three: Matthew 17:5

Reflection question: The Father speaks to the disciples from the crowd, exhorting them to listen to Jesus. Imagine the Father spoke those words to you: how does Jesus speak to you today? How do you tune 'the ears of your heart' to hear Jesus?

Day Four: Matthew 17:6-7

Reflection question: Imagine yourself in the scene, on the ground prostrate with the disciples. What would it mean to look up and see Jesus there, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid?"

Day Five: Matthew 17:1-9

Reflection question: As you read the entire passage today, imagine yourself in the scene. How are prompted to respond to the call to listen this Lent?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

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Read the day's passage once, slowly:

Take 2-3 minutes to ponder the passage. Note any phrase, word or image that stands out for you.

Read the passage a second time slowly:

Take a few minutes to ponder the passage again. Stay with the text: Why do you think the words or image stand out the first time? Is your mind drawn to another part of the text?

What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

Pray

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Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does he speak, or communicate with you in another way?
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

- Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from Pope Francis:

At the end of the wonderful experience of the Transfiguration, the disciples came down from the mountain... with transfigured eyes and heart from the encounter with the Lord. It is the way that we can also undertake. The ever more alive rediscovery of Jesus is not an end in itself but induces us to “come down from the mountain,” recharged with the strength of the Divine Spirit, to take new steps of genuine conversion and to witness charity constantly, as law of daily life. —Angelus, August 7, 2017

Reflection questions:

An encounter with Jesus can leave us seeing the world, our lives and those around us differently.

- Have you encountered Jesus—at prayer, in the Scriptures, in one of the sacraments, in others, or in some other way?
- Did you find yourself changed in some way? If so, how?
- Do you wish to meet Jesus? What do you seek from him?

Discuss

Allow each person to share what they encountered in their prayers this past week. They can respond to any question from their daily reflection or this session, or share an insight or experience that rose out of their prayer.

As the discussion draws to a close, ask if there are any needs members would like the group to pray for. If it is possible, at this time move to a chapel or the church for the closing prayer.

Pray

- Allow a time of silent prayer, allowing each person to offer their own silent prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and petition to the Lord.
- Allow additional time to sit in the Lord’s presence.
- If possible and appropriate, allow each person to offer any prayers aloud.

Close with prayer as is the custom of your community. It could be: a spontaneous prayer, a parish prayer for renewal said together, an Our Father, Glory Be or prayer to the patron saint of the parish asking his/her intercession, etc.

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent

March 15, 2020

John 4:5-42

Day One: John 4:5-15

Reflection question: Jesus proposes to the Samaritan woman that he has living water which will quench any thirst, bringing the gift of eternal life. What thirsts do you wish to quench with Jesus' living water? What would the gift of eternal life mean for you this day?

Day Two: John 4:16-26

Reflection Question: Imagine yourself in the scene and Jesus says to you, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." What would it mean, or has it meant, to recognize the voice of Jesus, speaking directly to you?

Day Three: John 4:27-34

Reflection Question: The woman left her water jar to tell the villagers about Jesus. What would you want to share with others about Jesus? What would you want others to tell *you* about Jesus?

Day Four: John 4:35-42

Reflection question: When Jesus stayed in the village for two days, the villagers got to know him themselves. How would you like to spend time with Jesus and get to know him this Lent?

Day Five: John 4:5-42

Reflection question: As you read the entire passage today, imagine yourself in the scene. Where do you find yourself? What questions do you have for Jesus? For the woman? For the crowd? How does this speak to your desire to know Jesus better this Lent?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

"Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there."—Guigo II, the Carthusian (ca. 1113-1193)

Read the day's passage once, slowly:

Take 2-3 minutes to ponder the passage. Note any phrase, word or image that stands out for you.

Read the passage a second time slowly:

Take a few minutes to ponder the passage again. Stay with the text: Why do you think the words or image stand out the first time? Is your mind drawn to another part of the text?

What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

Pray

1. Take a few minutes to be still and present to God.
2. Share your thoughts, questions with God.
3. Is God "speaking" to you? Remember: it may not be a voice you hear but a nudge, a consolation or an insight. If you are keeping a journal, you may want to write these down.
4. When you feel done, say a quick prayer thanking God for this time with him.

Optional Small group session to follow these daily reflections:

Pray the following prayer or one in your own words:

“Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there.”—Guigo II, the Carthusian (d.1297)

Allow each person to reflect upon their encounters with the Word this past week. They may wish to review any notes or journaling they did at that time.

Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does he speak, or communicate with you in some way?
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

- Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from Pope Francis:

Jesus' thirst was not so much for water, but for the encounter with a parched soul. Jesus needed to encounter the Samaritan woman in order to open her heart: he asks for a drink so as to bring to light her own thirst. The woman is moved by this encounter: she asks Jesus several profound questions that we all carry within but often ignore. We, too, have many questions to ask, but we don't have the courage to ask Jesus! Lent, dear brothers and sisters, is the opportune time to look within ourselves, to understand our truest spiritual needs, and to ask the Lord's help in prayer. The example of the Samaritan woman invites us to exclaim: "Jesus, give me a drink that will quench my thirst forever". —Angelus, March 23, 2014

Reflection questions:

- How has God been patient with you this Lent so far?
- What changes are you being prompted to make, so that, in time, you can bear fruit?

Discuss

Allow each person to share what they encountered in their prayers this past week. They can respond to any question from their daily reflection or this session, or share an insight or experience that rose out of their prayer.

As the discussion draws to a close, ask if there are any needs members would like the group to pray for. If it is possible, at this time move to a chapel or the church for the closing prayer.

Pray

- Allow a time of silent prayer, allowing each person to offer their own silent prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and petition to the Lord.
- Allow additional time to sit in the Lord's presence.
- If possible and appropriate, allow each person to offer any prayers aloud.

Close with prayer as is the custom of your community. It could be: a spontaneous prayer, a parish prayer for renewal said together, an Our Father, Glory Be or prayer to the patron saint of the parish asking his/her intercession, etc.

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 22, 2020

John 9:1-41

Day One: John 9:1-7

Reflection question: Jesus restored the sight of the blind man even though he didn't ask him for healing. Have you experienced the healing touch of Jesus? What was that like?

Day Two: John 9:8-23

Reflection Question: In this passage, the blind man and his parents relate the story of his healing to his neighbors and the Pharisees. With whom do you identify: the neighbors, the Pharisees, the blind man, his parents? Why do you think that is so?

Day Three: John 9:24-34

Reflection Question: Why do you think the blind man has the courage to confront his interrogators and call himself a disciple of Jesus, after only one encounter with him?

Day Four: John 9:35-41

Reflection question: What blind spots can keep us from seeing Jesus?

Day Five: Luke 9:1-41

Reflection question: As you read this passage today, imagine yourself in the scene. What words of Jesus particularly touch your heart today?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

"Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there."—Guigo II, the Carthusian (ca. 1113-1193)

Read the day's passage once, slowly:

Take 2-3 minutes to ponder the passage. Note any phrase, word or image that stands out for you.

Read the passage a second time slowly:

Take a few minutes to ponder the passage again. Stay with the text: Why do you think the words or image stand out the first time? Is your mind drawn to another part of the text?

What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

Pray

1. Take a few minutes to be still and present to God.
2. Share your thoughts, questions with God.
3. Is God "speaking" to you? Remember: it may not be a voice you hear but a nudge, a consolation or an insight. If you are keeping a journal, you may want to write these down.
4. When you feel done, say a quick prayer thanking God for this time with him.

Optional Small group session to follow these daily reflections:

Pray the following prayer or one in your own words:

“Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there.”—Guigo II, the Carthusian (d.1297)

Allow each person to reflect upon their encounters with the Word this past week. They may wish to review any notes or journaling they did at that time.

Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- *Leader: What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?*

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does he speak or communicate with you in another way?
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

- Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from Benedict XVI: The Sunday of the man born blind presents Christ as the light of the world. The Gospel confronts each one of us with the question: “Do you believe in the Son of man?” “Lord, I believe!” (Jn 9:35-38), the man born blind joyfully exclaims, giving voice to all believers. The miracle of this healing is a sign that Christ wants not only to give us sight, but also open our interior vision, so that our faith may become ever deeper and we may recognize him as our only Savior. He illuminates all that is dark in life and leads men and women to live as “children of the light”. —Annual Lenten Message, March 1, 2011

Reflection questions

- Has your vision changed since the beginning of Lent? Do you see Jesus differently?
- What blind spots remain in your vision?

Discuss

Allow each person to share what they encountered in their prayers this past week. They can respond to any question from their daily reflection or this session; or share an insight or experience that rose out of their prayer.

As the discussion draws to a close, ask if there are any needs members would like the group to pray for. If it is possible, at this time move to a chapel or the church for the closing prayer.

Pray

- Allow a time of silent prayer, allowing each person to offer their own silent prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and petition to the Lord.
- Allow additional time to sit in the Lord’s presence.
- If possible and appropriate, allow each person to offer any prayers aloud.
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PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 29, 2020

John 11:1-45

Day One: John 11:1-16

Reflection question: What do you think the disciples are thinking as they listen to Jesus in this passage? If you were there, what questions would you have for Jesus?

Day Two: John 11:17-27

Reflection Question: Why do you think Martha declares Jesus to be the Messiah? What would it mean to you to say Martha's words?

Day Three: John 11:28-37

Reflection Question: What does it mean to you that Jesus wept at the death of his friend?

Day Four: John 11:38-45

Reflection question: Why do you think some of the crowd began to believe in Jesus? Was it what he said? What Martha and Mary said? What they saw? What do you think it takes to believe in Jesus?

Day Five: John 11:1-45

Reflection question: As you read the entire passage today, what particular scene, word, image or phrase sticks out for you? What do you think God is trying to say to you through your scene, word, phrase, or image?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

"Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there."—Guigo II, the Carthusian (ca. 1113-1193)

Read the day's passage once, slowly:

Take 2-3 minutes to ponder the passage. Note any phrase, word or image that stands out for you.

Read the passage a second time slowly:

Take a few minutes to ponder the passage again. Stay with the text: Why do you think the words or image stand out the first time? Is your mind drawn to another part of the text?

What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

Pray

1. Take a few minutes to be still and present to God.
2. Share your thoughts, questions with God.
3. Is God "speaking" to you? Remember: it may not be a voice you hear but a nudge, a consolation or an insight. If you are keeping a journal, you may want to write these down.
4. When you feel done, say a quick prayer thanking God for this time with him.

Optional Small group session to follow these daily reflections:

Pray the following prayer or one in your own words:

“Lord Jesus, you who are the Son of the living God, teach me to listen to what you tell me in the holy Scriptures, and to discover your face there.”—Guigo II, the Carthusian (d.1297)

Allow each person to reflect upon their encounters with the Word this past week. They may wish to review any notes or journaling they did at that time.

Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does he speak, or communicate with you in another way?
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from the Benedict XVI:

[Jesus'] lordship over death does not impede Jesus from feeling sincere "com-*passion*" for the sorrow of detachment. Seeing Martha and Mary and those who had come to console them weeping, Jesus "was deeply moved in spirit and troubled", and lastly, "wept" (Jn 11:33, 35). Christ's heart is divine-human: in him God and man meet perfectly, without separation and without confusion. He is the image, or rather, the incarnation of God who is love, mercy, paternal and maternal tenderness, of God who is Life. Therefore, he solemnly declared to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die". And he adds, "Do you believe this?" (Jn 11:25-26). It is a question that Jesus addresses to each one of us: a question that certainly rises above us, rises above our capacity to understand, and it asks us to entrust ourselves to him as he entrusted himself to the Father. Martha's response is exemplary: "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world" (Jn 11: 27). Yes, O Lord! We also believe, notwithstanding our doubts and darkness; we believe in you because you have the words of eternal life. We want to believe in you, who give us a trustworthy hope of life beyond life, of authentic and full life in your Kingdom of light and peace. —Angelus, March 9, 2008

Reflection questions:

- How has your belief in Jesus changed this Lent? What "doubts and darkness" challenge you still?

Discuss

Allow each person to share what they encountered in their prayers this past week in this session. They can respond to any question from their daily reflection or this session; or share an insight or experience that rose out of their prayer.

As the discussion draws to a close, ask if there are any needs members would like the group to pray for. If it is possible, at this time move to a chapel or the church for the closing prayer.

Pray

- Allow a time of silent prayer, allowing each person to offer their own silent prayers of praise and thanksgiving, petition to the Lord.
- Allow additional time to sit in the Lord's presence.
- If possible and appropriate, allow each person to offer any prayers aloud.
- Close with prayer as is the custom of your community. It could be: a spontaneous prayer, a parish prayer for renewal said together, an Our Father, Glory Be or prayer to the patron saint of the parish asking his/her intercession, etc.

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, MEET GOD

Gospel at the Procession of Palms: Palm Sunday

April 5, 2020

Matthew 21:1-11

Day One: Matthew 21:1-3

Reflection question: Jesus sends two of his disciples to retrieve a donkey. Suppose you were one of his disciples, how would you respond? What questions might you have?

Day Two: Matthew 21:4-5

Reflection Question: What does it mean to you, that a king would enter the city on such a humble animal?

Day Three: Matthew 21:6-9

Reflection Question: As the disciples help Jesus prepare to enter Jerusalem, where might you be in this scene: with the two disciples, with the other disciples, with the crowd, or off at a distance?

Day Four: Matthew 21:10-11

Reflection question: How would you answer the question, “Who is this?”

Day Five: Matthew 21:1-11

Reflection question: As you read the entire passage today, imagine yourself in the scene. What particular part sticks out for you? How does Jesus meet you and communicate with you in that moment?

How to Pray Each Day

Pray:

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Read the passage a second time slowly:

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What do you think God is trying to tell you through the text today?

Consider the Reflection Question:

Jot down any thoughts or responses you have to this question—also make note of any questions that rose from the text.

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Read

- Have one person read the complete passage twice, with a 1-2 minute pause between readings.
- Allow time for silent reflection.
- *What stands out when you hear the text together? Is it something that stood out before, or is it something new?*

Meditate

- Have someone else read the passage once more.
- *Where do you meet God today in the Word? Does He speak, or communicate with you in another way?*
 - Sit quietly with God and wait for his response.

Ponder

- Allow time for each person to quietly reflect upon these words from St. John Paul II:
“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 19:38). With these words, the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus as he entered the holy city, acclaiming him as King of Israel. A few days later, however, the same crowd would reject him with hostile cries: “Crucify, crucify him!” (Luke 23:21). The Palm Sunday liturgy makes us relive these two moments of the last week of the earthly life of Christ. It immerses us in that fickle crowd, which in a few days changed from joyful enthusiasm to murderous contempt.
—Palm Sunday homily, April 4, 2004

Reflection questions:

- *As we enter into Holy Week, where is Jesus for you: on the back of the donkey, in the Upper Room, in the Garden of Gethsemane, standing before Pilate, nailed to the cross, in the tomb?*
- *Where are you: outside the city gates, inside the gates, with Pilate, at the cross, at the tomb?*
- *What do you want to say? What do you want to hear?*

Discuss

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