

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MARCH 3, 2019

MASS READINGS:

MONDAY: SIR 17:20-24, MK 10:17-27

TUESDAY: SIR 35:1-12, MK 10:28-31

WEDNESDAY: JL2:12-18, M5 6:1-6,16-18

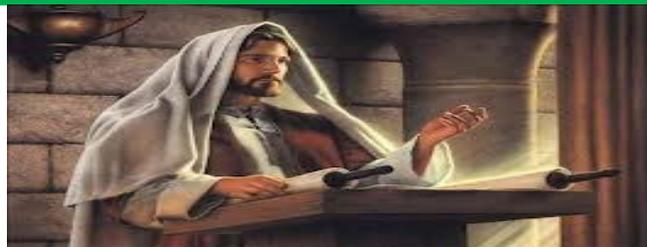
THURSDAY: DT 30:15-20, LK 9:22-25

FRIDAY: IS 58:1-9A, MT 9:14-15

SATURDAY: IS 55:9B-14, LK 5:27-32

NEXT SUNDAY: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT-DT

26:4-10, ROM 10:8-13, LK 4:1-13



*No disciple is superior to the teacher;
but when fully trained,
every disciple will be like his teacher.*

To be “like” Jesus is all anyone could wish for. And so we begin a journey as a student, μαθητής (disciple in the Greek). We might draw from our own experiences of what we were like in school and whether or not we might be described as a serious-minded student. For most of us there were subjects we gravitated toward and those we avoided. A disciple of Jesus has only one subject and that is LOVE. This love of course, is the sort of love that always and everywhere puts others first in the order of salvation. We conform ourselves to our Teacher so that we think, say and do those things which will advance the salvation of others as well as our own. A good way to begin is to use the gospel reading for that day. They may be found in a variety of places, this bulletin for one. And to use the Lectio method which we have spoken about in previous places to put the message of that gospel in our minds throughout the day and to engage in reflection on its meaning so that, when the occasion arises we may put that teaching into practice. But perhaps we might be getting ahead of ourselves. We begin each day with praising the Father for all that he has given us, first, the gift of his Son and then for this new day to exercise or discipleship for his greater honor and glory. Now we can read the day’s gospel and allow that living word to take hold of us as we prepare for and meet the days responsibilities. Bearing in mind that our priority is our salvation, for we could in fact meet the Lord at any given moment this day, since our next breath is not guaranteed us, we should be always and everywhere prepared as it we were about to do so. With that in mind we will undoubtedly greet that day and its challenges, hope and aspirations with a new vision of life here and hereafter. We will become Kingdom ready disciples as we form ourselves after the example of the great Teacher and in doing so, bring about his Kingdom in the little corner of the world in which we are situated by God’s Divine Providence. Striving to be so trained as to be adept and imitating our Savior we approach this task with great humility since all good things come from our Loving Father and our own efforts often fall far short of the mark if we were to rely on them alone. So we are a grateful people who acknowledge the living giving Word and Sacrament given to us for the sake of our salvation and that of others. Keeping these few things in mind we will greet each day with what is necessary to be skilled in discipleship and so imitate our Teacher and please our Father.

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: MARY LESTER

TUESDAY: CHARLES HILL

*WEDNESDAY: 7AM-FLORENCE SCHMELZEL,
NOON-SPECIAL INTENTION, 5PM-FOR THE PARISH

THURSDAY: LOUELLA THISE

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: MARY LESTER

7:30: FR. CHARLES MULLER

10:00: ARCHBISHOP THOMAS DONNELLAN

NOON: FOR THE PARISH

*ASH WEDNESDAY

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Jane Clapp. (John, Norbert & Catherine Renn, Vivian Calhoun, George & Robert Bolinger). Marian Schwartz. (Kenneth, Stephen & Gary Lamie). (Ed & Judy Buckles, Lawrence, Mary & Larry Johnston, Andy & Vera Houston). Barbara Kochert. (Marge Kirsch & Mickie Krebs). (Mike & Angie Kiral, Bob & Irene Netzel). Donn Miles. Jane Clapp. Clare Sturek

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MARCH 3, 2019

Μαθητής –A SERIOUS-MINDED STUDENT

Sherry Weddell's book "Forming Intentional Disciples" (OSV, \$16.95) is, I think, one of the most important Catholic books of this decade.

In it, she addresses the core issue facing the Church in our time: How to foster a culture in which all Catholics consciously see themselves as disciples of Jesus Christ living according to his will and as apostles sent into the world to proclaim him to others.

Weddell also outlines five stages of spiritual growth that typify the experience of conversion.

Conversion is, in the Church's thinking, not simply for "converts" — i.e., non-Catholics joining the Catholic communion — but for everybody. In the Church's thinking, not just Scott Hahn, G.K. Chesterton or Saul of Tarsus experienced conversion.

"Cradle Catholics" like Ignatius of Loyola, Francis of Assisi, Blaise Pascal and Teresa of Avila also had profound conversion experiences that transformed them. So must we.

Step 1: Initial trust

Where a person is able to have a positive association with Jesus Christ, the Church, a Christian believer or something identifiably Christian. Trust is not the same as active personal faith. Without some kind of bridge of trust in place, people will not move closer to God.

An example of initial trust is shown in the experience of a young garage-band pagan at the University of Washington in the late 1970s. He had almost no grasp of even the most basic aspects of the Gospel and had long ago learned the crucial truth of social life in the already heavily anti-Christian culture of Seattle: Christians are to be treated as social lepers. His perception of them was of fundamentalists obsessed with nutty "end times" theories, creationism and mysterious code words. His exposure to the Gospel consisted of a brief stab at reading Genesis and Revelation, coupled with some anti-Catholic Chick tracts, plus a few pious types he remembered from high school who might as well have spoken Greek for all the sense their lingo made to him. He knew essentially nothing about Christ and did not trust Christians.

I know this guy's story because he is married to my wife. And when I was 20 years old, I went home for Thanksgiving break only to return to my dorm with a case of Martian Stomach Flu so virulent that I found the prospect of a quick death rather appealing for a day or two. In the midst of this, I received a phone call from a friend living on "the Christian floor" of my dorm. I mumbled something about my illness and hung up. About a half an hour later, there was a knock at my door and I heaved myself up from my bed of suffering, my face smeared with drool, and answered it. It was a young woman named Sandy MacKinnon, who I did not know from Eve, but who lived on the Christian floor. She said, "I heard you were sick. I brought you this" and brandished a bottle of Pepto-Bismol.

It's been 35 years, but I have never forgotten that. With that one act of kindness to a stranger, done simply out of generosity, she won my trust. And eventually, by the integrity of their lives as Christians, the rest of the fellowship of Christians on her dorm floor did likewise. Lives lived in joy, generosity and integrity — not for show, but for the glory of Christ — can and do break down walls of distrust and give off a sweet aroma of beauty that people follow.

Step 2: Spiritual curiosity

When a person is intrigued by or desiring to know more about Jesus or some aspect of the Christian faith. This can range from mere awareness of a new possibility to something quite intense and proactive. Nevertheless, a person at the threshold of curiosity is not yet open to personal change. Curiosity is still essentially passive, but it's more than mere trust.

The spiritually curious, often shyly and in fits and starts, find themselves drawn toward wanting to know more about Jesus, the Church, the Bible and the whole "Catholic thing." This can be a protracted and complicated affair, as the Catholic Faith encompasses the whole universe, and the human person is massively complex and approaches the Faith from all over the map.

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MARCH 3, 2019

One thing to bear in mind is that such curiosity is not the same as spiritual seeking (that's two steps down the road). It is, as yet, a passive approach. A person who is spiritually curious is interested in learning more.

He or she will not dismiss "God talk" but will not initiate such conversations. They will be quietly "taking it in." They are intrigued and may find themselves surfing the Web furtively to explore something or other about Jesus or the Faith, or wondering about some theological question prompted by anything from a half-remembered Bible verse to a speculation prompted by a science-fiction story they saw on TV.

Interestingly, Jesus' pedagogy with the spiritually curious is often the deeply Jewish method of answering questions with questions or with answers designed to provoke more questions. "Why do you call me good?" (Mk 10:18). "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15). "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mk 10:51). "Was John's baptism of heavenly or of human origin?" (Lk 20:4). "Whose image is this and whose inscription" is on this coin (Mt 22:20)? All these questions and many more were asked by Jesus in order to force the curious more deeply into their curiosity. This is important for us, as it can be a temptation to accidentally put out the small fire of newly kindled curiosity with a gallon of hasty, pre-processed answers. Sometimes it is better to let the curious work through things themselves for a while and make the answers their own.

In our own lives, it is good to cultivate an attitude of curiosity as well so that we can pass it on to others. Some have foolishly said, "What the mind doesn't understand, it worships or fears." The truth is not that simple. Typically, what the mind doesn't understand it either ignores or wonders about. Those who cultivate spiritual curiosity in themselves and others are on a trajectory, not only to learn more about God, but about everything, because God is the author of everything. But they are not yet worshipping, for they are not yet acting as intentional disciples.

If they make the choice to follow their curiosity, then exploration, not fear and worship, is typically what happens next. Moses at the Burning Bush was not afraid or worshipful, but curious. Worship (and fear) only began when he learned who was there, not when he didn't know who was there. In short, wonder is the common root of all art, philosophy, science — and religious experience.

But it is not the flower.

Step 3: Spiritual openness

The critical point when a person acknowledges to him or herself and to God that he or she is open to the possibility of personal and spiritual change. This is one of the most difficult transitions for a postmodern nonbeliever as it can feel dangerous, crazy and out of control. Openness is not a commitment to change. People who are open are simply admitting they are open to the possibility of change.

Here we are concerned with the most important form of curiosity: a desire to know more of God. And that desire will, if all goes well, lead to the crisis of spiritual openness.

I call it a crisis because spiritual openness is the stage in the spiritual journey that is most difficult for commitment-averse postmoderns to navigate because it represents the point in the journey where serious choices need to be made. It is the moment when it dawns on us that we are going to have to be active somehow, not merely passive — that God might not merely be an abstract "what" or a "why" we are studying with growing philosophical interest, but a "who" that is calling to us with incalculable demands and desperately beautiful promises. We realize, however dimly, that Jesus Christ and the Church that speaks to us of him may indeed require something of us.

That can be scary in a civilization that is consumer driven, that believes in keeping all its options perpetually open, that fears commitment to all relationships. Because of this jitteriness (and because we ourselves may share it even if we are cradle Catholics), some rules of thumb might be helpful both in helping others and in passing this threshold ourselves.

As we struggle to open ourselves to God's will in Christ, we can practice nonjudgmental truthfulness, speaking plainly of the places in our own lives where we find the Gospel challenging.

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MARCH 3, 2019

This was, after all, the method of the apostles, who give us a full accounting of their failures of nerve, their inability to understand and even their betrayals of Christ. We do this not with a view to finding excuses for ignoring the Gospel, nor with a view to cudgeling others who are struggling, but with a view to opening ourselves to the leading of Jesus and supporting one another in our struggles.

As mentors to people who are struggling with openness, we can help them connect the dots between their experience and the revelation of the Gospel. Because grace builds on nature, and it is Christ who chooses us first and not we him, there is always a way to arrive at the realization that God is not some remote, far-off object, but has already been at work in us and through us. He has already used us in some way for the good of others, or given us gifts, or helped us down the path we might only now realize we are on. Often, we can help others by using their own words, and connecting them with the Gospel will help them realize God is not a threat to our freedom, but the ground of it, and help them get past the fear of openness.

At this stage, it is often beneficial to frankly and openly encourage those struggling with openness to ask God for a sign to direct them, to encourage them to pray and profess to God their openness to pursuing him, and to encourage them to enter into a life of regular prayer both alone and together with others.

This might be a good time to invite them to Mass or to begin reading the Gospels together. Also, the inquiry phase of RCIA can be helpful here.

Step 4: Spiritual seeking

The threshold in which a person moves from being essentially passive to being one who actively seeks to know the God who is calling him or her. Seekers are asking, “Are you the one to whom I will give myself?” At this stage, the seeker is engaged in an urgent spiritual quest, seeking to know whether he or she can commit to Christ and his Church.

Once past this crisis of openness, people often find they are no longer able to simply wait for the tide of life to wash events to them. They become active spiritual seekers.

Weddell describes spiritual seekers as “dating with a purpose.” They are no longer merely passive participants in a relationship. And that relationship is not primarily with religion or theology or music or the Bible or a saint or Catholic aesthetics or liturgy or any other mere creature (though those things may well play a vital role and be inextricably bound up with the relationship). Rather, the core relationship is now with God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In short, the seeker is seeking Jesus, not a creature or an abstraction.

If you are mentoring somebody who is a seeker, this is the perfect time for them to enter the catechumenate. If you are yourself a seeker who is undergoing a deeper conversion as a Catholic, this is a good time to undertake a closer study of the Faith, specifically with the goal of using the gifts and graces of the Church (especially the sacraments) in order to seek the guidance and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Spirit to help you cultivate your gifts and offer them (and yourself) to Christ with greater and greater freedom. At the core of this stage of conversion is the experience of a soul that, like the psalmist “followeth hard after thee” (Ps 63:8) and can no longer be content with passivity or neutrality.

Intensified prayer, a fruitful pursuit of reading the classics of Christian spirituality and a sense of growing hunger for the sacraments can characterize this stage of pre-discipleship, as well as a desire to explore the ways in which the Faith is lived out in the works of mercy, different liturgical expressions and ways in which the virtues can be pursued.

Step 5: Intentional discipleship

This is the decision to “drop one’s nets,” to make a conscious commitment to follow Jesus in the midst of his Church as an obedient disciple and to re-order one’s life accordingly.

The mention of “pre-discipleship” brings us to our last challenge: namely, the need to finally pass from exploration of Jesus and his Church to full and complete commitment. This is what Weddell calls the “dropping the net” moment. The image comes from the story of St. Peter dropping his nets, leaving behind his former life and livelihood, his social connections, his home and even his family and choosing to follow Jesus Christ wherever he went, come what may (cf. Lk 5:4-10). It is the single most important decision a person can possibly make (which is why Jesus calls us to count the cost). But it is the goal of the Christian life — all Christian lives, not just converts.

It can be as dramatic as St. Paul getting knocked off his horse or as unseen as a quiet resolve arrived at during a sleepy Sunday morning Mass. But however we arrive at it, that resolve to follow Jesus consciously and intentionally with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength is what the whole of the Christian call to discipleship is all about. Once made, that decision will henceforth be the controlling decision that will drive and coordinate everything — absolutely everything — in the life of the disciple of Jesus Christ and, as Paul says, “destroy arguments and every pretension raising itself against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). Here begins the New Life. (Taken from OSV.com)

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MARCH 3, 2019

FROM THE WEB SITE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES

The 2019 Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6, for Latin-rite Catholics with Easter Sunday on April 21. During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seeking the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by [giving alms](#), and to sacrifice self-control through [fasting](#). Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season. Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this [reflection](#). In addition, the giving of alms is one way to share God's gifts—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. As St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2446).

Lent is a favourable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ."-- Pope Francis

In Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults](#), a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

On these pages, you will find a variety of suggestions and resources to help you "raise up," "sacrifice," and "offer" during this Lent and to embrace your baptismal commitment.

Catholics are also encouraged to make going to confession a significant part of their spiritual lives during Lent. The U.S. Bishops' statement, ["God's Gift of Forgiveness: The Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation"](#) can be distributed and shared in parishes. Dioceses are encouraged to make the sacrament available often during Lent and to use [these resources](#) to promote participation. We also have [resources to help individuals](#) who have not been to confession in a while "rediscover" the sacrament. FIND ALL THIS AND MORE AT <http://www.usccb.org/>

The Seven Penitential Psalms and the Songs of the Suffering Servant

The Seven Penitential Psalms and the Songs of the Suffering Servant from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah are traditionally used for meditation and prayer during Lent. At the page link above, you will find links to the text of the psalms and songs from the *New American Bible, Revised Edition*, along with audio versions and written reflections to encourage the practice of *Lectio Divina* or "divine reading," a way of praying with Scripture that calls one to listen to, study, contemplate and thoughtfully assimilate God's Word.

ALMSGIVING

The foundational call of Christians to charity is a frequent theme of the Gospels. During Lent, we are asked to focus more intently on "almsgiving," which means donating money or goods to the poor and performing other acts of charity. As one of the three pillars of Lenten practice, almsgiving is "a witness to fraternal charity" and "a work of justice pleasing to God." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2462).

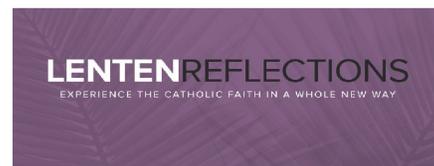
Remember man
that you are
dust and
you shall
return.



Announcements and Upcoming Events



SOUP, STUDY AND STATIONS RESUMES. BEGINNING FRIDAY, MARCH 8 AT 5PM WE WILL GATHER IN MEMORIAL HALL FOR MEATLESS SOUP, A BRIEF REFLECTION ON THE UPCOMING LENTEN SUNDAY READINGS AND THEN TO THE CHURCH FOR THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS. MAKE THIS A PART OF YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY, ENRICHING BODY AND SOUL AND ENJOYING FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHERS. (Stations will begin at 6pm for those who cannot make the entire program)



Journey through Lent with Dr. Tim Gray

Set yourself up for a transformative 40 days with FORMED Lenten Reflections. Get daily videos from esteemed Scripture expert Dr. Tim Gray delivered right to your inbox so you don't miss a day of growing closer to our Lord.

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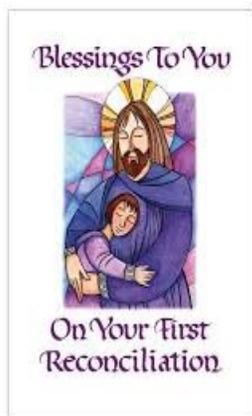


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- Lindsey Rainey



Spring Antioch Retreat! All teens in the Greater Lafayette area who are in grades 9-12 are invited to join in a weekend retreat filled with faith and fun put on by teens who have previously attended Antioch. The retreat will be held the weekend of March 15th-17th, at Saint Thomas Aquinas in West Lafayette. For more information and to register, visit DusalSaints.com or contact Sue Bayley, 765-404-0473. Please register by Friday, March 8th. (Late registrations will be accepted but not guaranteed a t-shirt.)

Dear Friends of St. Ann,

Thank you so very much for your incredibly generous and kind support to Caregiver Companion at the St. Ann Breakfast! Because of you, elderly and homebound neighbors as well as their caregivers are greatly blessed with God's love and compassion through our team of caring volunteers. Thank you for reminding aging widows and widowers, frail neighbors, and weary caregivers they are not alone. God bless you and thank you for loving your neighbor as yourself.

God bless,
 Caregiver Companion Staff

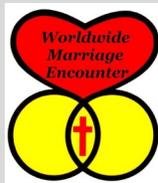


SUPPORT THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE



© GREAT GOD, ONE IN TRINITY, I ENTRUST TO YOU THE HERITAGE OF FAITH OF THE SLAV NATIONS; PRESERVE AND BLESS THIS WORK OF YOURS!
 - ST. JPII, SLAVORUM APOSTOLI

Are you living a busy life and don't really have time to talk to your spouse? We have a gift to share with you; it's called a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend**. The Weekend will give you the opportunity to examine your lives together. A time to share your feelings, hopes, joys and frustrations without the interruption of family commitments, TV, internet and phone calls, rather it is a time to get to know your spouse all over again and rediscover your deep love for each other. Future Marriage Encounter Weekends will be at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis, from 26-28 April and from 1-3 November 2019, and at Mount Saint Francis Centre for Spirituality, New Albany, from 16-18 August 2019. Visit www.wwme.org for further information.



Quote from a couple who made a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend: "Thank you for the most rewarding Weekend of our lives. We are looking eagerly to many exciting years together. We wish every young couple could have a Marriage Encounter Weekend."

SUNDAY OFFERING:

\$7392

"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"

ST. AUGUSTINE