

St. Colette Parish

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# OUR LENTEN JOURNEY TOGETHER

*A collection of reflections by the  
community of St. Colette Parish.*

Beloved St. Colette parishioners,

*“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son  
“ (Hebrew 1:1-2)*

The story of our salvation is brought to us in small portions through the Holy Scriptures and Jesus' birth breaks into the open as His story unfolds before humanity, for all to see. Jesus is the new Adam that breaks the yoke of sin and punishment of death. He is the new Moses that brings the law to fulfillment and takes God's faithful to the new promised land beyond geographical and earthly boundaries.

A few months ago, we all celebrated His birth to our world and this special friend and Son of God leads us into yet another powerful testimony of how God loves us. The Lenten period through Easter is filled with rich symbolism and tradition. This season solemnly prepares us to celebrate Jesus' victory over earthly major predicaments of sin and death as he reveals God's unconditional love and mercy; meanwhile remaining faithful to His Father; Our God!

I want to thank everyone who has humbly accepted the invitation to share with us their real-life experiences connected to our faith. Hopefully in their stories and testimonies you have moments of reflection that add insights to the blessedness of Lent and the Easter Season.

St. Colette – Pray for us.

*Fr. Mahonge*

Pastor of St. Colette Parish

*Wednesday, February 26, 2020*

*Ash Wednesday*

*Joel 2:12-18 • 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2 • Mt 6:1-6, 16-18*

In Preparation for ourselves as we walk/journey with our Lord Jesus in these 40 days before His passion of the Cross begin with the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, let us turn our whole hearts to the Lord, through fasting maybe with food if our health allows it or can tolerate it. Giving up something we love to eat and love most in our daily routine such as eating chocolate, favorite ball game, Facebook browsing, video games etc. Giving up any little thing that we love most and have our hearts and soul unites to God, ask God forgiveness for He is loving and merciful.

Every day I praise and thank God, for the blessing for my life, family and friends and for all my physical pain. I know it's only a portion of the physical pain of Our Lord Jesus Christ on his Passion of the Cross. I thank God for all His creation I'm in contact with, the weather, gentle and fierce breeze of winter. Prayers for those people difficult to deal with, a prayer coming from our hearts. The Lord knows what we need and want even before we say it. Go to a quiet place., or be still in a moment and thank God for that very moment or second with Him in the midst of our busy life.

God our Father, God the Son our Lord Jesus Christ and God the Holy Spirit, pour out the blessings to our lives. It may be too insignificant to notice, but every little thing that we receive is a blessing from God and it's time to give it back to the Lord. Any simple act of kindness and encouraging words to our difficult neighbor, smile that we give to the person /stranger, for it's the face of our Lord Jesus; that we see in others. It will go on from person to person just like a chain reaction. Charity works that way so we share with the poor. There are so many ways to give back to the Lord all the blessings that we receive, faith, hope, love and charity that we can share to our neighbor and the poor in a humble way.

*Silma Kuivinen*

Eucharistic Ministers

*Thursday, February 27, 2020*  
*Thursday after Ash Wednesday*  
*Deuteronomy 30:15-20 • Luke 9:22-25*

Who says being a Christian is easy? Our Lord from the beginning when deciding to come to the world and take our human condition, knew and knows what human beings go through and live in this pilgrim life.

He went through all that and more for what a human being can suffer. And it teaches us that after all this suffering there is hope for a better life.

I speak to you, that you may be tired and even fed up of carrying your cross. I know it is not easy, it implies tiredness, pain, and suffering; I know that sometimes you will fall and it will cost you to get up, but remember that Mary, your Mother, is always by your side. Remember that there are one or more Cyrenians that will help you carry the cross and there will be people, such as Veronica, who will clean, not only your face but your soul.

If you ask yourself: why me? Why does all this happen to me? I want you to believe and know that all this is because Jesus trusts you and He knows that you can overcome this, held always from by His hand. As Jesus says: “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for me will save it.”

*Deacon Raul Trejo*

*Friday, February 28, 2020*  
*Friday after Ash Wednesday*  
*Isaiah 58:1-9a • Matthew 9:14-15*

As we go through our daily lives as practicing Catholics, we try our best to follow the teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We have learned from an early age that fasting is a part of the Lenten season: no meat on Ash Wednesday or the Fridays of Lent. Restaurants see our ritual as an opportunity to increase their profits by offering “all you can eat fish frys”. For us it is a reminder to observe how we live our daily lives and reflect on ways we might become better.

As we follow Jesus on His Lenten journey, we might ask ourselves:

What am I doing to make the world a better place?

Am I doing my best to help those in need to the best of my ability?

Do I try my best to see the face of Jesus in every person I meet?

Do I follow the Golden Rule and treat every person the way I myself would like to be treated?

Am I forgiving of those who may have hurt me?

Do I open my mind and heart fully to listen to God’s Word through His Disciples on earth?

May your Lenten journey be blessed with a new awareness of God’s unending love for all of us.

Peace be with you,

*Bonnie Meyer*  
Ministry of Care Coordinator

*Saturday, February 29, 2020*  
*Saturday after Ash Wednesday*  
*Isaiah 58:9b-14 • Luke 5:27-32 -18*

And after this he went forth, and he saw a publican, named Levi, sitting in the tax-collector's place, and he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving all things, he arose and followed him. And Levi gave a great feast for him at his house; and there was a great gathering of publicans and of others, who were at the table with them, And the Pharisees and their Scribes were grumbling, saying to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a physician, but they who are sick. I have not come to call the just, but sinners, to repentance."

As with Levi, we all need to follow Jesus and have faith. Only God is perfect. We are descendants of Adam and Eve and were born with original sin. We all need the word of God to attain holiness.

God gave us the 10 commandments, the Beatitudes, Works of Mercy, Sacraments and especially confession to help us in our daily lives. But more than this, Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead so that we can go to heaven.

*Mary Ann Bugiel*  
Adult Choir

*Sunday, March 1, 2020*

*First Sunday of Lent*

*Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7 • Romans 5:12-19 • Matthew 4:1-11*

A common theme among the Old Testament reading from Genesis and Matthew's gospel is temptation. Adam and Eve were tempted by the devil disguised as a serpent. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, which is one of the reasons our Lenten season lasts 40 days.

Although temptation can often feel evil, it is not a sin. Otherwise our Lord could never have been tempted Himself. Temptation is never from God, but God allows us to be tempted. I believe that this is not because we may fail, but that we may grow in holiness. Temptation causes us to stand up and make a choice either for God or for the temptation. Although mercy and forgiveness are always offered when we fail, there may be blessings to be had when we overcome temptation.

Enduring and conquering a temptation helps us see the strength of God in our lives. Temptation humbles us, takes away our pride and our ongoing struggle with self-reliance. Rejecting the devil clarifies our vision of who he is so that we can continue to reject him. Overcoming temptation strengthens our virtues.

Jesus' temptation did not increase His holiness, but it did give Him the opportunity to manifest His perfection within His human nature. We may find joy in overcoming temptation in our lives when we realize that this strengthens us to the core of our being. We must also do so in humility, realizing that we have not accomplished this on our own but only by the grace of God in our lives.

*Catherine Reich*

Music Director

*Monday, March 2, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18 • Matthew 25:31-46*

“Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy.” On that Easter Vigil after receiving the Sacrament of Baptism as an adult, I kept smiling and thinking that I have become a child of God. Physically nothing has changed, but something in me is and should be different. Later I came to understand that Baptism is the transformation of my heart. I now bear Christ’s name as a Christian, my thoughts and actions need to be “Christ-like.” To achieve “holiness” in my daily actions is a priority. Jesus also told His disciples, “Be holy as your Heavenly Father is holy” in the Sermon on the Mount. Often people seem to translate the word “holy” as to be good, like a person walking around with a halo. If the Saints acknowledge themselves as sinners, I definitely am so much smaller and fall short in heroic virtues. It is better for me to understand the meaning of “be holy” is to be set apart. The One who called me has set me apart for a purpose and I strive to stay close to Him to serve the purpose He has planned for me. I pray ... Lord, lead me always to know you with my heart.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus gave us a glimpse of what would happen at the end time during the final judgement. He will separate the sheep from the goats. Looking to St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, her entire mission is based on Jesus’ teaching, “You did it to Me.” If I see Jesus in every person ... may they be the poor, the dying, the good and the people who treat me unjustly, I have to love and even give my life for them if necessary. All because in everything I can offer, it is to Jesus that I am offering it to. It is possible because an encounter with the risen Christ is the propelling engine of evangelization. As in today’s psalm, “Let the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart find favor before you.”

*Jennifer Chan*

Adult Choir

*Tuesday, March 3, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Isaiah 55:10-11 • Matthew 6:7-15*

Jesus taught people to pray the words of the Our Father. This prayer is about our relationship with God the father. Each phrase we say is a meaningful promise to God. I cannot say Hallowed be thy name. If I, called by God's name, am not living faithfully. I cannot say who art in heaven, if I become so invested material possessions that I lose sight of God. I cannot say forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us if I cannot forgive others.

God invites us to be a part of his kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is what comes to mind. But, what about a kingdom on earth. It is interesting to think that we can be part of God's kingdom on Earth. When we gather as a group to serve others or listen at mass we are part of God's kingdom.

For children The Lord's Prayer is a great way to teach them about God's Word. God the father is the most abstract part of the holy trinity. Teaching young children to have a relationship with God is special. God's love is unconditional. Kids love to talk about their favorite animals, places, or seeing all the stars in the night sky. All God's creation for us. He has a special place called heaven. Finally, the prayer can teach kids about Gods forgiveness.

*Allyssa Burchert*  
Spirited Hearts

*Wednesday, March 4, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Jonah 3:1-10 • Luke 11:29-32*

In reflecting on these two readings what came to my mind was God's love for his people and His forgiveness. In both readings the message is that of repentance.

In the first reading Jonah preached to the people of Nineveh to repent. They reformed from their old ways and the city was saved.

In the second reading Jesus was preaching to the crowds about this being an evil age with evil people. He said to them Jonah was a sign to the people of Nineveh so to will the Son of Man be a sign to the people of this age.

He referred to Judgement day when the queen of the South, who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, will condemn the men of this generation. Jesus said you have a greater one than Solomon here. The citizens of Nineveh will also rise on judgement day to the people of this present age and condemn them, for with the preaching of Jonah they reformed. Again, Jesus said you have a greater one than Jonah here.

Jesus was referring to himself. He is the greater one, greater than Jonah, greater than the wisdom of Solomon and greater than the people of Nineveh.

He comes ready to forgive our sins with His love, grace and mercy.

During Lent we have the opportunity to ask for forgiveness. We can look into ourselves and repent. To change from old ways, to fast and pray and most of all to be the people God wants us to be.

*Olga Carlson*

Bereavement Ministry

*Thursday, March 5, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Esther C:12, 14-16, 23-25 • Matthew 7:7-12*

The reading in the book of Esther showed me that danger, anguish, persecutions and fear can all be overcome by asking God for help. Like Esther, I also need to ask God for help during painful experiences that I go through in life. But I know what I need to do is leave all my problems in the hands of God.

The Gospel of Matthew reassures me that God is good, God is always present in my life, and God is close by me. I just have to ask, seek him out, or knock at his door and he will answer.

It hasn't always been easy for me to leave all my problems in God's hands, especially in the moments I'm scared, treated unjustly, frustrated, or am suffering. But not leaving my problems in God's hands has only brought me more tears and headaches. All because I tried to solve something on my own that doesn't have a perfect solution. And so, I ask God to give me a humble heart to be able to endure the problems that arise in life. Also, I know that, the heavenly Father will guide me through my life so I can treat others as I would like them to treat me.

*Maria Trejo*

Parishioner

*Friday, March 6, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Ezekiel 18:21-28 • Matthew 5:20-26*

Ezekiel 18:21-28

We are not the sum total of our actions. If we do more good things than bad things, we are not a good person. If we do more bad than good, we are not bad.

The person we become is who we are. It doesn't matter if we were good or bad in our past. It is who we evolve into that matters. Where we are at the end of our journey is what matters.

Matthew 5:20-26

At first Jesus seems to lower the bar by saying we must be better than Scribes and Pharisees to get to heaven.

He didn't regard Scribes and Pharisees highly. Jesus often thought of Pharisees as hypocrites. They knew the Jewish Laws but did not necessarily abide by them.

Then Jesus seems to raise the bar by listing actions we must not perform. We must not murder. We must not be angry. We must not insult.

*George Benas*

Parish Finance Council

*Saturday, March 7, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Deuteronomy 26:16-19 • Matthew 5:43-48*

References to the heart and love resonate in these two readings. I am asked to obey God's commands by observing them with all my heart. I am asked to love and pray for those I may feel are against me or cause me concern. How can I be asked to do that? It's just too hard!

The answer lies in my response to the unconditional love God grants me. God accepts me for all aspects of my being – my strengths and my weaknesses. My acceptance that His love extends to all peoples will help guide me to do what I am asked to do ...look beyond the differences in others and see the light of God in them.

The poet Rumi wrote, "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

Dear Lord, help me find the way to that field.

*Pat Wright*

Parishioner

*Sunday, March 8, 2020*

*Second Sunday of Lent*

*Genesis 12:1-4a • 2 Timothy 1:8b-10 • Matthew 17:1-9*

Christ's Transfiguration: a call to conversion.

When Christ transfigured himself on Mount Tabor he revealed his glory to his three apostles: Peter, James and John (Mt. 17: 1-9). Moses and Elijah came down from heaven on that holy mountain and talked with Jesus about his coming passion and death. The Blessed trinity revealed Himself there. The Father spoke in the voice revealing Christ as his beloved son and calling on the apostles, and invariably calling on everyone to listen to Christ. The Son was the transfigured and the Holy Spirit appeared in the cloud. The entire event calls on all Christians to pay attention to the teaching of Christ and live their lives in conformity to it.

Abram who later became Abraham was called by God to leave his father's land to go to an unknown land (Gen. 12:1-4). Abram was 75 years at the time and he obeyed. He left his land trusting in God and based on his faith he successfully made it to his destination. Likewise, we are called by God to the Father to listen to the His only Son. This call makes a demand on us.

This demand implies works of faith that are evident in Charity and charity covers a multitude of sins (1Pt 4:8). When we do the works of charity, we at the same time fulfill the law (Rom. 13:10). St Paul reminds us not to be ashamed in doing these things since Jesus has saved us because of His own purpose and grace (2Tim 1:8ff). In other words, this is a demand on us to make conversion of heart.

*Rev. John Ekwoanya*

Resident Priest

*Monday, March 9, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Daniel 9:4b-10 • Luke 6:36-38*

Who am I to Judge?

In today's readings, we are simply and directly guided by God as to how to live our lives. Ah, but living this out is not always so simple, is it? From the moment we wake in the morning, the barrage of opinions and judgments begin to shape how we think and act toward ourselves and others. Judgments fill the space around us much like the air we breathe. Judgments come at us in many directions; and we, in turn respond in kind. Is it a wonder that our young people often begin a sentence with "please...no judging." So often judgments are borne of unchecked so called "facts," or ugly rumors or unexamined motives. Some judgments are obviously necessary, however, let us strive to judge not only a person's actions, but the fullness of his or her heart. Our young people are trying to figure it all out, let us not unfairly judge them. Much like Daniel, they are asking to be shown mercy, love and justice.

Perhaps, we need to begin by looking at ourselves as to how we judge others and the motive behind our judgment. Is our aim to point out the issues and failures of another person to make ourselves feel better about the messes in our own lives or to make us feel superior? So often we look past the identity of another as a child of God and see only the identity of the sinner. In a homily to young people back in 2002, St. Pope John Paul II's, hope filled message reminds us that, "[we] are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures, we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of His Son."

Let us learn to leave such judgments for our God. After all, we will be called by the ultimate Judge, our God, so full of mercy that He gives us chance after chance. Let us begin to give others chances as we look to our own words, actions, attitudes and perspectives with the challenge to form them by how Jesus lived and what He taught. During this Lenten season, let's aim to bring others to Christ by sharing our faith through merciful acts of kindness. Let our motives be one of changing our hearts; and, instead of judging another, let us be Christ-like to them letting Jesus work through us to draw them to the cross.

Reflection: Let me spend time this week asking God to examine my heart to show me the people I judge too harshly and let me choose mercy instead of judgment.

*Lori Brandt*

Youth Minister

*Tuesday, March 10, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Isaiah 1:10, 16-20 • Matthew 23:1-12*

After reading both scriptures for March 10, 2020, I can see that both Isaiah and Matthew remind us to be good, to do good, to follow what Jesus has taught us. Many times, though, we forget the words that tell us "to stop doing wrong, make ourselves clean, seek justice, defend the oppressed". We think we are doing as much as we can to live a clean and healthy life, and that by attending Mass it will satisfy the duty we have to be good, always.

Guilt is a strong and negative feeling that leads us to do the right thing, the minimal thing that makes us think that we are obeying the Lord. At times, I am guilty of this, as I make a judgement call as to what I have to do, what I can do, and what I want to do. I try to help those in need, not only those who ask, but the ones I can see need love and attention, without expecting a thank you. Through monthly donations, I care for children who are dying from incurable diseases, for unwanted and abused pets. Could I do more? Always, but at least, I do something.

If we are willing and obedient, as Matthew tells us, we can live a better life. Going to church and attending Mass is not good enough, because some people forget to walk the talk, to put into practice what they have heard at Mass. I know that during Lent, I will be more careful to make better choices and to be an example, in a silent, yet, powerful way

*Mary Lee*

Eucharistic Ministers

*Wednesday, March 11, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Jeremiah 18:18-20 • Matthew 20:17-28*

As Christians we are inspired to pray for the needs and good of one another. At times our efforts could be misunderstood or even unwelcomed. We pray anyway. Perhaps we don't see the results we hope for.

It was the same for the prophet Jeremiah. Called by God to bring the people to repent of idol worship and evil deeds, he experienced a lifetime of rejection, exile and pain. Trusting the Lord, Jeremiah did not live to see the results of his sacrificial life. Lesson: God does not ask for our success, only our obedience and trust.

The message clearly is that our call like Jesus' is not to be served but to serve the needs of all with whatever gifts have been given us.

*Lu Cavi*

Eucharistic Ministers

*Thursday, March 12, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Jeremiah 17:5-10 • Luke 16:19-31*

These two readings are a study in contrasts. The Prophet Jeremiah seeks to show us how life will turn out for us: first by trusting in man (not so good) and secondly by trusting in the Lord (very nice). Now we take a look at the Gospel of Luke. The poor beggar Lazarus only had hardship his entire life, while the rich man "... lived in luxury everyday". However when death comes to both, it is Lazarus who is given the best.

The last 10 years of my life I have been placed in the role of caregiver. It is the most difficult task I have ever had to do. It is a daily challenge, something I would have never imagined. The experience has taught me that the three most important virtues caregiving demands are patience, kindness, and energy. Being put in the role of caregiver has opened my spirit to these beautiful gifts.

I know that I am prayed for everyday by the St. Colette community. My children are always present, helping in small and big problems and seeing that Mom gets some time to herself. Finally caregiving has become my journey—not just through Lent but everyday of my life.

Donnie Shirmer  
Lector Ministry Coordinator

*Friday, March 13, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a • Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46*

The gospel readings make a remarkable connection between what happens when people feel threatened by one individual. People will do the impossible to protect their self-interest without taking into account the backlash or consequence that this might produce to others. The desire for power and control are two ingredients for destruction; this includes self-denial and isolation from the rest of humanity. The harm created cannot be reverse only left with painful memories. Without putting aside our human differences, it is more difficult to view the world with clarity, respect, dignity, and God's grace.

Joseph and Jesus' life experience took a turn for the worst inhumanely mistreated, hated, falsely accused, and sentenced to unwanted punishment, pain, and suffering. In Genesis 37:3-28, Joseph, one of the twelve sons of Jacob (Israel), favored and loved by his father. Joseph had a gift to interpret dreams; his brothers felt jealousy and wanted him dead. The brothers plotted to kill Joseph; instead, they sold him. The brothers' greedy desire for power and control disconnected them from their actual reality; their behavior and actions are unjustified. In the gospel of Matthew 21:33-46, Jesus talks about his pain and suffering; he describes how he is unwanted and falsely accused, condemn to death. Jesus shares a parable about a landowner, his vineyard, and how his servants are mistreated including his own son. Jesus' parable is directed to the chief priests and the Pharisees how their greediness, self-serving interest, thirst for power, and control will exclude them from inheriting the promise to the Kingdom of God.

How do you battle your injustices in your life, community, or society? Putting aside personal self-interest are initial steps to breaking existing barriers. Occasionally people's fears betray their thought process and forces them to respond defensively, unconsciously realizing the harm, pain, and suffering afflicted to others and unfairly condemning to death. Take the time to reflect, and to ask God to help restore faith in humanity, but most essential to lead us to a path of reconciliation with those whom we have caused harm, pain, rejection, and suffering. The story of Joseph and Jesus is a constant reminder of the injustice in society and around us.

How can this Lenten season be heart changing for you? Where do you think your conversion will lead too? In the end, both Jesus and Joseph forgave their loved ones; they view their pain and suffering as an opportunity for change and hope, others will follow.

*Carlos Roman*

Director of Religious Education

*Saturday, March 14, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Micah 7:14-15, 18-20 • Luke 15:1-3, 11-32*

Confession could be seen as Saturday morning's spiritual "cleansing". We go, do penance, and we're good to go. It's as though God's forgiveness is episodic – take as needed.

In Micah's prayer (7 –18-20) we see the truth of the infinite and eternal constancy of God's forgiveness and compassion. We see our God "delights in clemency."

The father of the prodigal son (Luke 15: 11-32) clearly delights in forgiving his penitent son, but I believe his response to the elder son is full of love and mercy as well: "You are with me always, and everything I have is yours". (This passage is like the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:20, "Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world!". )

So, we step into the confessional and are immediately wading into what's already there, the river of always was, always will be, and always remains the same, the river of forgiveness, mercy, clemency, and delight in clemency.

GOD'S PRESENCE.

*Kathy Heffernan*

Ministry of Care

*Sunday, March 15, 2020*

*Third Sunday of Lent*

*Exodus 17:3-7 • Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 • John 4:5-42*

We all know the importance of having faith; Jesus invites us to have faith. Although sometimes we feel suffering and pain, that's when Jesus will make us stronger and deliver us from all guilt, through his suffering and his pain until his death.

Christ makes us feel stronger, free and without blame for our sins. Let us walk hand in hand with Jesus with love, will and faith and together we will be a strong and firm people and church.

If in the walk we feel tired, weak and thirsty, we have faith that Jesus will give us the rest, the strength and that living water that we all need to continue living and together with his love we will achieve glory and eternal life.

Jesus invites us to fight for our Church and make it a thriving church full of love and faith, and so together and with our children we will enjoy the love of Christ.

*Jose Osuna*

Hispanic Ministry Vice-President

*Monday, March 16, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*2 Kings 5:1-15b • Luke 4:24-30*

Naaman a great and highly respected commander of the Syrian army listened to advice from a little Israelite child. He asked his king for permission to allow him to go be cured. He brought much wealth for payment. He listened to his soldiers who respected him and who told him to listen to Elisha and wash himself in the Jordan river. He respected Elisha who did not want payment. He asked for dirt from Israel to bring to Syria to worship the God who healed him.

Jesus, a prophet in His own land was not believed to be the messiah. Many people were not healed because they did not believe Jesus could cure them. Naaman was one of the few cured by Elisha. Naaman came from a different land. He did not have any preconceived notions to get in the way of his belief in being cured.

*Christine Faflik*  
Parish Pastoral Council

*Tuesday, March 17, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Daniel 3:25, 34-43 • Matthew 18:21-35*

The First reading today reminds us of God's mercy and forgiveness. These passages are part of the story of King Nebuchadnezzar and the Jewish martyrs Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The King built a Golden Statue and required all to fall down and worship this statue or be cast into a furnace to be burned alive. The three martyrs were turned in for refusing to pay homage to this false god and were cast into the furnace but did not burn. The reading passage comes from the prayer of Azariah as he prayed to God in the furnace, praising God's love and seeking forgiveness for earthly transgressions. Azariah recognizes that man is sinful and yet God is so merciful that he forgives time and time again.

Matthew's gospel reading is the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. In this parable a king forgives his servant's debt in mercy and the servant vows to repay him. However, instead of showing mercy to those who owed him a debt, the servant treated them with disrespect and had them jailed. The king heard about this and rebuked the servant for his evil behavior and put him in jail until his debt was paid.

These readings bring home the meaning of Lent as a time of repentance and renewal. We are humans, and as such, we are sinners. But God constantly forgives us and hopes that we should learn from our sins and choose to live a good and holy life. We also need to have faith that our God, the one true God will hear our prayers and rescue us from evil-doers who would try to lead us astray. In a way, this unconditional love reminds me of being a parent. As a parent we try to teach our children to lead a good life with both rules and leading by example. And as parents we are often disappointed that our children don't always make the right choice, but we do not stop loving them because of their choices. We forgive and hope they make the right choice next time. We are all God's children, and He will love us unconditionally when we make mistakes time and time again. We need to allow God to forgive us and choose to repent and try harder.

*Barb Bryk*

*Finance Council*

*Wednesday, March 18, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9 • Matthew 5:17-19*

In today's Gospel Reading, Jesus tells his disciples that He has not come to abolish the old law, but to fulfill it. Many people in those days, as well as today, believe that Jesus came to write a "new" law, but he emphasizes here that the laws of the Old Testament are still very much an important criteria for a good life. We have to live by the 10 Commandments if we are truly going to make it to heaven, and when we fail or lead others towards failure, (which we humans tend to do), then we must repent and confess our sins in order to bring our relationship with God back to solid ground.

Thankfully God has provided us with a way to make up for our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As we approach Easter Sunday, wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone took the time to take part in this wonderful Sacrament, and then lived their lives trying to follow the 10 Commandments to the best of their ability. Imagine what a beautiful world we could live in.

*Joe Quinlan*

*St. Colette School Principal*

*Thursday, March 19, 2020*  
*St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
*2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16 • Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22*  
*Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a*

St. Joseph had profound experiences that give an account of his important role in the life of Christ. Before Joseph and Mary were together he found that Mary was with child. An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Joseph completely accepted the angels call. He knew this was a direct calling from God. Joseph was asked to take care of Mary, protect the baby she was carrying, provide shelter for them and have faith in God. This was the path to his holiness. Joseph's faith in God transforms him into being holy, hidden, silent, and a constant guardian as he welcomes the Son of God as the son of a carpenter. When we follow the example of Joseph we recognize that the path to holiness for a father is to make a home for his family. A father respects the mother of his children, he cares for his children by being present, providing shelter for them and protecting them. Like Joseph he understands that this is his calling from God. He leads a hidden, holy life.

Joseph's life as the guardian of Jesus is tested when Jesus was twelve. Jesus went with his parents to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. Joseph and Mary were not able to find Jesus when the feast was over. After three days they found him in the temple sitting among the teachers listening to them and asking questions. Son why have you treated us so? Behold your father and I have been looking for you anxiously. Jesus replied, do you not know that I must be in my Father's house.

Imagine the worry and concern Joseph and Mary have when they cannot find Jesus. They looked everywhere for him. And then he was found. What happiness and relief they must have felt when they found him in the temple, and what a mystery was placed on Joseph's heart when Jesus said, I must be in my Father's house. Joseph must have heard those words, loud and clear. Joseph saw God in his midst. He loved Jesus. He understood. This is what fathers do. Joseph is again our example as he teaches us to love our children and then to let them go. They belong to God and they must go and do God's holy will. St. Joseph pray for us.

*Gail McCusker*  
Pastoral Assistant

*Friday, March 20, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Hosea 14:2-10 • Mark 12:28-34*

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

The gospel today speaks volumes! It is such a simple command but so many of us struggle to keep it. In trying to test Jesus, the scribes posed a question. Of course Jesus answers it with authority and righteousness.

There are two things I find to be most impactful in this scripture. First is the prioritization that Jesus puts in this commandment. All of the work, sacrifice, prayers, mass attendance, etc. mean less than how we treat one another. We must use these things to put this commandment into practice. Pray for one another, sacrifice time, treasure and talent to help those in need, offer mass for our deceased and sick.

The second thing is the Kingdom of God. To me the Kingdom is not a destination but rather an experience. It should be felt in the way we live our lives and how we treat one another. By practicing this and continually living this experience of the Kingdom, we are in turn bringing the Kingdom to others.

How do you live the Kingdom of God?

What is a new way we can show the Kingdom of God this Lent?

I pray the Holy Spirit rains upon us this Lent in new ways so that we may be impelled to live in an even deeper discipleship.

*Fellow Parishioner*

*Saturday, March 21, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Hosea 6:1-6 • Luke 18:9-14*

As I ponder both selections, I realize they present one thought from two points of view: Luke, from the individual and Hosea, from the community. Both texts remind me that true prayer calls for placing my focus on God. Luke displays the effect of focusing on myself, my titles, all the “good” I’ve accomplished, considering myself better than others (the Pharisee) while describing the Tax Collector, humbling himself by not even lifting up his eyes to heaven, truly repenting by asking God’s mercy on him, a sinner. The contrast couldn’t be more vivid.

Hosea begins by describing Israel and Judah acknowledging their sins, asking for forgiveness and confidently anticipating God’s mercy. He then portrays God, constantly frustrated by the community’s sins, having sent the prophets to confront them to repent, yet even now simply longing for them to know and to love Him as He is and not by offering sacrifice.

My Jesus, teach me to place myself in Your Hands.

*Dick Wright*

Parishioner

*Sunday, March 22, 2020*

*Fourth Sunday of Lent*

*1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a • Ephesians 5:8-14 • John 9:1-41*

Wake up, you who sleeps. Rise from the darkness and Christ will be your Light. The Light of Christ shines on us. From the day of our baptism; we are thus, children of the Light, called to produce fruits of kindness, justice, and truth. Let us not be distracted by appearance. God does not judge like man; man looks at appearance, but God looks at our hearts.

*Maria Escutia*

*Religious Education*

Today's readings invite me to challenge the shadows of darkness that arise in my daily life. They invite me to imitate Jesus, to be responsible and to radiate the light that comes from Christ with my own behavior. Oh divine Jesus, my Savior, pardon the blindness in which I have lived ignoring the immensity of your love and mercy.

*Argelia Trejo*

Hispanic Choir

*Monday, March 23, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Isaiah 65:17-21 • John 4:43-54*

There are always moments in a Catholic's life that we ask God for signs.

God, if you truly hear me, please heal my loved ones?

God, if you exist, let me get this promotion?

Jesus, show me you are real and grant me my request.

While we should continually pray and ask God for his aid, we must remember to keep faith. In the gospel, Jesus reprimands the people for only believing when signs were given. However, when Jesus was asked to heal the official's son, He does so in turn converting a whole household. It seems a bit contradictory but I believe it isn't. God will not abandon those who have faith in Him and ask of Him. This has been proven time and time again in scripture, saint's lives and in our own lives.

We also experience tough times when it seems God has abandoned us and we don't feel His presence. Times like this invite us into a deeper level of faith and trust in Him. It is one of the harder aspects of religion. We must trust and have faith in our faith.

So when we ask for signs and are heard, it is a moment to inspire witness among your neighbors and loved ones. Share your stories to help bring others into relationship with God. When we feel we aren't heard, turn to prayer. In that time spent in conversation with our Lord, we will feel His presence and He will put in front of us the path forward even if it may not be what we planned.

I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me. That is today's Psalm and that should be our prayer when we feel he has answered us. Let us ask God to help us share our stories of faith and to deepen our trust in His will.

*Fellow Parishioner*

*Tuesday, March 24, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12 • John 5:1-16*

As I read Ezekiel's words, I was struck by his willingness to trust the angel. He saw water stretching out in front of him, and simply kept walking through it; even as it became impossible to stand. Even still, he continued moving forward. When he eventually was brought to the bank of the river, he was surrounded by trees, and was told how the water was made fresh when it reached the sea. So many times in life, I have had absolutely no idea where my life was taking me, but by continuing on the journey, I, like Ezekiel, have been brought somewhere wonderful.

Similarly, in reading the Gospel of John, I was reminded that sometimes following God's plan can be unclear, and perhaps go against what you think you should believe. The man took up his mat when Jesus told him to, despite it being "wrong" as it was the Sabbath. In order to be healed, the man had to follow what Jesus told him, even though others thought it wrong. Jesus told the man not to sin so that nothing worse would happen to him. By listening to Jesus, he was healed, and by continuing to do good, he would be well.

Overall, today's readings remind me that, while the path may be unclear, trusting that we should keep going and listening to what God wants us to do, even when we do not understand it, is so crucial, because we never know where we will end up, but by trusting in His plan, we know it will be somewhere great. We must trust in Him, regardless of what our peers may say, or how scary it may seem.

*Lauren Chipchak*

St. Colette School Alum

*Wednesday, March 25, 2020*

*The Annunciation of the Lord*

*Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10 • Hebrews 10:4-10 • Lk 1:26-38*

Today, we have one of the greatest stories ever told, where man's redemption was set in motion. The Annunciation. But I want to focus on someone in this story, and that is Mary. Now, of course Gabriel and his message to Mary is important, but to me what is important was the major action of saying Yes. To me, Mary is the strongest woman ever. She has so much on her shoulders, and she took it on with no questions. Mary, not knowing about what was in store for her agreed and committed herself to God's plan. Since we are in this time of Lent, a time of sacrifice. To me the Annunciation is the moment you see a major sacrifice made by her. She gave up her life, and any plans she may have had to follow God's will.

Further along in Jesus's childhood, Mary is shown what kind of pain she would have to endure in the future when Jesus is older, and still she follows God's will. Mary is the best example of what it means to use one's life as a sacrifice for the betterment of humanity. Mary shows the sacrifice you give, is the action of saying Yes even when everything else in your head and around you is saying No. You see people say, "It's a lot harder to say No, then to say Yes." And yet when it comes to God, humanity seems to say No a lot and goes as far as questions Him and the plans He has, whither it benefits us or not. Mary, being who she is, understood that even though God's will and the path He decides to lead us down to may never be easy. In the very end it will bring great joy and blessings, kind of like after every thunderstorm comes a rainbow. So, where does this leave us? Well, today you are invited to look into your life, see where God is calling you to make a sacrifice of saying Yes and if you are currently in the middle of that and it seems super rocky. Maybe, your rainbow is coming just up ahead.

*Rosa Osuna*  
Receptionist

*Thursday, March 26, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Exodus 32:7-14 • John 5:31-47*

God Loves us!

Sometimes these words seem so big. So, general. Of course, He loves us, He created us! These words are all around us...we sing about God's love, we see scripture John 3:16 all over celebrities, sporting events, billboards, clothing, etc. But, do we "really" know it? Do we know it on a personal level throughout each day in the midst of all we do? Do we live it?

As both readings reveal to us today, God will never give up on us. No matter how "stiff-necked" we are. God created us for relationship and longs for a loving relationship with His people. So much as, He gave his ultimate expression of Love through the sacrifice of His Son for our salvation. It is through Jesus that we are saved. Jesus comes to us as God's Word to show each one of us how to live in Love and Mercy, in relationship, so that we may have eternal life with God the Father. Think about that!!! That is Love!

Perhaps you can carve a few extra minutes out of your day today to spend time with Jesus. Pray. Be still. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you listen to what Jesus is revealing to you. Listen with your heart and let yourself be loved.

*Teri Toenjes*

Parish Pastoral Council

*Friday, March 27, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22 • John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30*

During that night, sadness and tremor ruled my person. I was worried because I did not know what would happen with me. But I knew that God was not going to abandon me. With my Heart full of sadness I asked God to let me live.

Of course, God let me. Now, I am trying my best to serve God the best way I can.

*Estela Paz*

Hispanic Ministry Liturgy Coordinator



*Saturday, March 28, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Jeremiah 11:18-20 • John 7:40-53*

Word Came to Jeremiah from the Lord to speak to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to keep the covenant the Lord had given their ancestors. But the people returned to the crimes of their ancestors and refused to obey God's words. They followed and served other gods.

Jeremiah learned of a plot against him, seeking his life. "But, you, Lord of Hosts let me witness the vengeance you take on them for to you I have entrusted my cause!"

Those who speak God's truth will always have people who want to be in control and own the religion. When confronted by their sinfulness they want to get rid of the accuser.

In the gospel some of the crowds began to believe that Jesus is the prophet. Some wanted Him arrested. They fail to realize that God's prophets are His gift to them to help them change their hearts and accept God's mercy. Christ is the ultimate gift.

*Marge Loesch*

Sacristan

*Sunday, March 29, 2020*

*Fifth Sunday of Lent*

*Ezekiel 37:12-14 • Romans 8:8-11 • John 11:1-45*

As we head toward the end of our Lenten journey, today's readings speak to me in two ways:

First, as Christians there are few bible stories that are more memorable than that of Lazarus. Even from the time of being a child, we probably can tell the gospel story of what happened to Lazarus, if we were asked. He died, but Jesus brought him back to life. Jesus did this as a sign of what was to come for each of us through His sacrifice and our faith in him – eternal life. What is a little less obvious, at least to me, is what are the roles of the other people in this Gospel reading and their potential contribution to guide our lives?

Those two people are Lazarus's sisters – Martha and Mary. From an earlier part of the bible, we hear how, when Jesus visited their house, Martha was unhappy that she was doing all the work preparing the meal, while Mary waited on Jesus, even washing and anointing his feet. Martha complains to Jesus about this and is reprimanded, and that Mary is taking care of the right things. It is always a question for me – am I taking care of the priorities related to my faith and my love of our Lord – something I will try to focus on more this last week of Lent.

The second thing that comes to me from today's readings actually comes from the psalm, Psalm 130, v 3-4. It speaks of God's great ability to forgive, even though He knows all are sinners. I hope that in this final week, I can find and give forgiveness in His way. No small task for some, but we must try.

*John Baruch*

Operations Director

*Monday, March 30, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 • John 8:1-11*

The readings of the day focus on the mercy of God and the saving power of those who believe in it. The first reading gives us a rather intriguing tale of Susanna who has been put in a compromising situation by two older men. They accuse her of adultery because she has refused to accept their sexual advances. This seems all too familiar in today's society with the emergence of the #metoo movement. Susanna gives us the example of faithfulness to God and his promise of justice and mercy. In trusting God and turning to prayer, she is freed of fear and ultimately freed from the evil grip of powerful members of society who have taken advantage of her. Daniel, through the power of the Holy Spirit, steps in to save Susanna and ensure justice prevails.

The gospel mirrors the same theme of mercy in the story of the Adulterous Woman. The moral of this story has become a cliché, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.", but nonetheless this continues to be relevant. Jesus, who is mercy and love itself, releases this woman from the punishment of her sins with the guidance that she is to sin no more.

We too are freed and released by the love and mercy of God when we participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation with a humble and contrite heart. Personally, I have experienced the power of God's mercy and continually pray for it in my life. These two readings help us see that when we recognize the need for God's mercy and accept it in our hearts, we need only to trust in Him. He has already won salvation for us. The only thing left is for us to embrace it and live faithfully in His ways, spreading the message of mercy and love to those whom we come across.

Let our prayer today be that like the crowd before Daniel, we may continue this Lenten journey "blessing God who saves those who hope in him".

*Eduardo Guillen*  
Parish Secretary

*Tuesday, March 31, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Numbers 21:4-9 • John 8:21-30*

God's people having never been the most obedient group of folks. Often they have been quite rebellious. One of those occasions was during the sojourn in the Sinai on the way from Egypt to their new home in Israel. As the story goes, in response to their rebellion God "sent among them Saraph serpents" which bit many of them and caused them to die. Realizing their mistake, the Israelites asked Moses to plead with God to rid them of this disaster. So Moses prayed for the people and God told him to make a saraph serpent and hang it on a pole. As many of the Israelites who had been bitten looked upon this saraph on the pole they were able to live. This saraph on the pole became the symbol and means of their healing.

This symbol of the serpent on the pole has come down to us as one of the most significant symbols in our society. It is the symbol of the healing arts. It can be seen on almost every piece of Emergency Medical Services Equipment. It is that symbol that assures us that healing for whatever our malady is at hand.

John's Gospel is not always the easiest to understand because of his use of imagery and poetry. In this particular passage he is pointing the Christ as our Healer. John uses the words of Jesus to describe the rebellion of the people of his time and also to point out our attitudes of rebellion against the compassionate and merciful loving God who reveals himself to us in Jesus. Jesus replaces the Saraph on the pole with himself on the cross and provides not just physical healing, but the healing that leads to eternal life.

*Rev. Brian Simpson*

*Wednesday, April 1, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95 • John 8:31-42*

Throughout our life our faith is tested many times and in many ways. Many of us will experience intense hardships that they feel they cannot escape. How do you respond in these situations? Do we bend and fall or do we stay strong in our faith? Do we pray for Jesus to remove us from the fire or to stand with us? How do you respond when you see others walking through the flames? Do you remain in his word and become disciples, the hands and feet of Christ?

As the church we are all members of His body and are called to serve those in need. We are called first and foremost to care for the poor and vulnerable, for works of justice, and mercy. We are called to distribute food to the hungry, welcome the stranger and care for the sick, to challenge those who allow injustice to go unchecked. The call to be Jesus to those in the flame will look different for each of us and like Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego we have a choice to make about whether or not we will stand up for the Lord and by those in need. I pray each day to be strong in my faith, to choose to stand with those in the flame, to live my faith for others to see.

*Mary Tornabene*

PADS Site Director

*Thursday, April 2, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Genesis 17:3-9 • John 8:51-59*

Abraham listened to God, he did not ask for anything, just listened in prayer to what God had to say to him. Has God ever spoken to you, has He called you to service, has He told you of your destiny? God speaks to me through the Scriptures and tells me of His love for me and what He needs me to do to be His disciple. God tells me to keep His Covenants.

The journey can sometimes be hard even as Jesus found His journey of suffering and death difficult but He persevered and did His Father's will to give the world salvation. Jesus is the Covenant given to Abraham to insure the world of salvation and Jesus gives us His New Covenant to love one another as He has loved us. During this Lenten season let us remember the sacrifice of Jesus dying for us and giving us the promise of eternal life. During my journey through Lent I find great joy in seeing the young and the old who are to be confirmed in the Catholic faith and knowing that God had asked me to direct them on their journey.

*Brian Lovitsch*

RCIA Coordinator

*Friday, April 3, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Jeremiah 20:10-13 • John 10:31-42*

Today we are led by the Church to reflect on two figures: the prophet Jeremiah is persecuted for speaking the truth in God's name, and our Lord Jesus Christ is persecuted for revealing a truth about himself—namely, that he is the son of God. In both cases, people are plotting to kill each of them for telling the truth.

We know from scripture that Jesus, in his ministry, did only good deeds to the people of his time. So, when he knew they were going to stone him, he asked this question: "I have shown you many good works from my Father. For which of these are you trying to stone me?" And they answered: "We are not stoning you for a good work but for blasphemy. You, a man, are making yourself God." The first irony is that Jesus did a lot of good works but it took one sentence for people to stone him. The second irony is that the judge of mankind was incarnated and came to save us, but we have made ourselves his judge.

In this Lenten season, maybe the Lord is calling me to reflect on how I judge the people around me and how I judge God himself. Maybe instead of judging the people around me for one act, I might be better off to consider their good deeds and pray for their shortcomings. And, if there is any truth about God that I cannot understand or accept because of how challenging it is, maybe I should consider humbly praying about it and asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten me.

*Jean Boussari*

Branches Young Adult Prayer Group

*Saturday, April 4, 2020*

*Lenten Weekday*

*Ezekiel 37:21-28 • John 11:45-56*

These readings of Ezekiel and John to me refer to the struggle between good and evil, the end of times, when people will have two choices only: To believe in Jesus Christ and Heaven or go the way of Satan and hell. "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me". (John 14:6)

Those who choose Jesus and follow the commandments will experience a peaceful, blessed future for many generations and ultimately Heaven. Corrections by God are in our future. People must be converted now, through the Sacraments of the Church and heartfelt prayer. There is no other way. One must choose which path they are going on; Good or evil.

Jesus died on the cross for us so our sins would be forgiven and our future would be in Heaven. One day there will be one nation of God's Holy people and peace on earth.

*Mary Benson*

Lector Ministry

*Sunday, April 5, 2020*

*Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord*

*Mt 21:1-11 • Is 50:4-7 • Phil 2:6-11 • Mt 26:14—27:66*

I have been attending Palm Sunday mass for the past 22 years. It is a celebration and a very important time. It marks the beginning of Holy Week and the start of the Passion. I remember being younger and walking into the lobby of the church and seeing the big baskets on the table full of palms. It was such an exciting time to be able to pick out a palm and watching as my mom folded them into crosses. Then after mass bringing them home and putting it up in my room, to remind myself what it represents. Palm Sunday is not only known for its palms but also for the very long gospel reading, which tells the story of the passion of Jesus and his path to Calvary. While the reading is very important to hear, it always reminds me of the time I almost passed out during that gospel while altar serving. Not my fondest memory, but that day was definitely one to remember.

The gospel may be long but it's extremely important, and tells us an amazing story of Jesus' path and crucifixion. While Jesus is on the cross he screams out, "My God, my God why have you forsaken me." This has always stuck out to me, because even the most devote Catholic may feel at times that God has abandoned them. In times of hardship, stress, and worry it is easy to think God is no longer there to support us. Although, it is times like Holy Week that remind us God is a constant in our life. He is our salvation. He will never let us fall. During Holy Week, with Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and then Easter, we see as Jesus takes his journey with the cross and that God was always with him. He rose him up from the dead. Christ our Lord saved us from our sins and by his Passion shows us that we are not abandoned but immensely loved by our God.

When have you felt in your life, that God has "abandoned" you?

What was your God moment, when you realized He was there all along?

*Marie Lombardo*

St. Colette School Alum

*Monday, April 5, 2020*

*Monday of Holy Week*

*Isaiah 42:1-7 • John 12:1-11*

As we begin Holy Week this year, the beginning of this reading from Isaiah highlights the mission of Jesus Christ as servant. The word servant denotes one who is devoted as a helpful follower or supporter. Servanthood involves humbling oneself, submitting to God, and living a life that meets the needs of others while not expecting a reward. Jesus served God by doing the will of the Father in a world that was badly in need of salvation. God knew that Jesus would accomplish this difficult mission despite the challenges that this world presented. I think some people may not have recognized the Father's gift of Jesus Christ. There may have been some who saw Jesus Christ as Savior, but as humans will, could not believe it and thought it was too good to be true and turned away. On the other hand, there were some who did recognize Jesus Christ, but it was difficult to walk that hard road with Jesus. It's true that the road is not always easy, but if I personalize this scripture passage by putting myself in this story, I realize that I have the perfect example of God's trust in Jesus to fulfill the mission. My realization is that I must follow this example and live my faith as servant of God and servant to others, just as Jesus Christ served the Father.

This passage from the gospel of John is the story of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany. Jesus had already raised Lazarus from the dead, and arrived at Bethany to dine with Lazarus and others, including Mary, Judas Iscariot, and Martha who served the dinner. It was Martha's nature to serve others, while Mary anointed the feet of Jesus to the displeasure of Judas, who saw this as a waste of resources that could have been used for the poor. It's hard for me to imagine how I would have reacted had I been present at this dinner with Jesus. Service and anointing are two actions from this passage that resonate with me. I have always been motivated to serve others as wife, mother, and grandmother and in my chosen profession as registered nurse. My reflection on anointing brings the memory of my mother's illness and death from cancer in 2003. My mom was also a nurse, a very strong woman of faith who served others in her profession and always served us in a concrete way, like Martha, with delicious dinners at her home. I think about the last days of her life and the visible peace that came upon her when she was anointed in the hospital before coming home to hospice. The more important thing at that time was anointing. The anointing prepared my mom for her journey home, just as Jesus was anointed before his death and resurrection.

*Diane Ryzner*

Parish Finance Council

*Tuesday, April 7, 2020*  
*Tuesday of Holy Week*  
*Isaiah 49:1-6 • John 13:21-33, 36-38*

This, to me, is a very sad reading. Jesus is with his disciples and he tells them that one of them will betray him. He knows that it is Judas, his friend.

Imagine that, your friend, the one who has been beside you always now has changed and is the one who has sealed your fate. He has started the chain of events of evil, torture, pain and death. How hard it is for Jesus to accept the fact that his life is ending but he is betrayed by his friend. He asks Judas to do it quickly. How many times have I betrayed my friends? Been mean to them, spoke about them to others behind their backs?

Jesus, I am sorry for betraying my friends. Thank you for giving up your life for me.

I also feel sad for Judas. He gets the bad rap for all eternity. I pray for Judas. I pray for the people who make one mistake that changes their entire life.

*Mary Vitale*

St. Colette School 4th grade teacher

*Wednesday, April 8, 2020*  
*Wednesday of Holy Week*  
*Isaiah 50:4-9a • Matthew 26:14-25*

In today's first reading we hear again from Isaiah, as we often do during the preparation seasons of both Lent and Advent. I am moved by his eloquence and his "well trained tongue" given to him by the Lord. Writing during the Babylonian exile and hundreds of years before the incarnation of the Lord, Isaiah paints for us the picture of the suffering servant and also the very Passion and suffering of our Lord.

The passage prompts me to reflect on the requirements of discipleship. While it might seem easier and more desirable to focus our lives only on our own pleasures, it is a recipe for a hollow life. A life that in the end is "like a garment consumed by moths". To follow the Lord and be a part of His Kingdom means we must deny ourselves--that is, put the needs of others before our own. I am comforted by the idea that "I will not be disgraced" and that "I shall not be put to shame".

This reading is coupled with Matthew's gospel where Jesus knowingly prepares for his own suffering and brutal execution. Not only will he give his back to those who would beat him, and his cheek to those who would pluck out his beard as foretold by Isaiah, but he sits at table with the very one he knows will betray him and set to motion his suffering. He knows that it must be so, that he must not intervene or stop it for his ultimate glorification and victory over sin and death cannot be realized before he empties himself out.

Given what He did for me, and for all humanity, how can I not have mercy on the hungry, the thirsty, the imprisoned, the poor in spirit or the stranger?

*Matt Feikes*  
Parish Pastoral Council

*The ways of our precious patron, St. Colette.....  
As God wills, as it pleases God.*

As this season of Lent comes to an end, let us reflect on the life of our patron saint, St. Colette and her love of solitude, her desire to be alone; alone with God. St. Colette's love for Our Lord was not ceasing even in the year before her death. The labors of years past had worn her out. She suffered painful edema, burning pain in her mouth, facial neuralgia and failing eyesight. It was her failing eyesight that troubled her most for she would have grieved to have not been able "to gaze upon the consecrated Host and read God's love in His holy Book..."

Even in her poor state of health, it is written that, "on Fridays she touched no food whatever between 6:00 a.m. and 6 p.m. in remembrance of the Passion of Our Lord, but spent all that time in intense contemplation of His sufferings and death. In those heavenly hours she forgot everyone and everything but her Beloved. Because she longed to be with Him, she rejoiced in her infirmities."

*March 6, 1447, St. Colette "entered into the joy of the Lord, a joy for which she had been preparing on earth by glad service and cheerful giving that made her life a thing of beauty and inspiration for all who knew her."*

*Lori Brandt*



Resources: Tall in Paradise, The Story of Saint Coletta of Corbie by Albert P. Schimberg (pg.22) and A Valiant Woman by Florence Wedge, (pg. 51)



