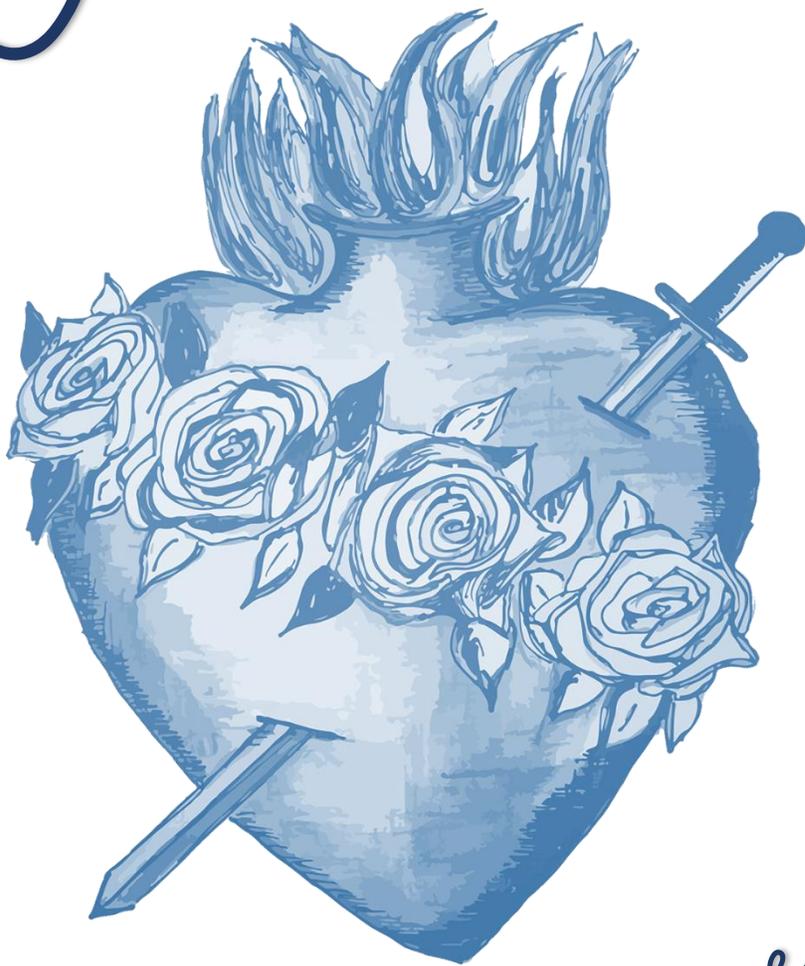


Heart 40



Lord, I give you my "yes"

Dearest Sister,

Wherever you are on your journey with the Lord, thank you for your “yes” to His love and work in your life that has led you to Fiat 40. “Fiat” is Latin for “let it be done.” In the Catholic world, it refers to the response Mary gave to God when she said, “I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to Your will.” Fiat 40 echoes Mary’s “yes.” It is the fruit of love that originated from my “yes” to the Holy Spirit’s prompting in my own heart.

Three years ago, I had heard of Exodus 90 for men and similar programs (Fiat/Nineveh/Judith 90), so to speak, for women. They had become trendy (and still are) among Catholics. The women’s versions left me wanting more motivation or purpose. Thus, I created Fiat 40 as a way to live an intentional “yes” to the Lord during Lent, a “yes” that permeates mind, body, and soul. It is not simply a list of dos and don’ts nor is it a way to “earn” Sainthood or salvation. It is a way to live out more fully the Lenten season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving through purposeful community both on earth and in heaven.

With the world basically shut down, 2020 left most of feeling stripped bare and forced to focus on the core of who we are. For me that meant re-committing myself to resting in my identity as Beloved Daughter and not in what I do or what I have. It meant doing less, uprooting bad habits, and detaching from that which was not of the Lord. 2020 was a year of the Lord planting seeds in my heart and in 2021 I am excited to watch those seeds be broken open to produce fruit. With that in mind, I ask you, sister, to reflect on where the Lord wants to grow fruit in you. I ask you to *prayerfully discern* if Fiat 40 will bear fruit for you. And if it the entirety of the program seems overwhelming, ask whether choosing three practices from each section would bear the fruit of peace in your life and focus on those throughout this Lent.

As always, I encourage you to form a group of women (3-7) who are interested in walking with you throughout this season. I suggest meeting with them once a week to share struggles, keep accountability, and grow in community. You can also join the Fiat 40 group on Facebook to keep up to date and share stories, questions, or comments.

Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta) once said, “The woman’s soul is fashioned as a shelter in which other souls may unfold.” As we begin this Lenten season, I beg you to be a shelter for the other women in your life. Ask our beloved Mother Mary to teach you how to embrace those around you in the same way that she embraced Jesus. I’m praying for you.

Humbly His,

Kim Marie Krings

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Lord, I give you my “yes” through my body...

1. *I will begin my day with the heroic minute.* I will wake up to my first alarm without pressing the snooze button. By doing this, my first action of the day will be for God.
2. *I will eat only three meals a day.* My meals will include a main item with up to three side items. I will refrain from snacking between these meals. By doing this, I will be practicing moderation and temperance.
 - a. *alt. I will refrain from using added condiments.* This includes spices used after the recipe has been completed, dipping sauces, salad dressings, and cream/sugar to coffee.
3. *I will refrain from eating sweets or desserts.* By doing this, I will be practicing self-discipline and offering gratitude for the meals I have been given.
4. *I will refrain from drinking alcohol.* By doing this, I will be practicing sobriety and asking God to fill me with His Holy Spirit.
5. *I will commit to the Lenten restriction of refraining from meat on Fridays as well as Wednesdays.* In Roman times meat was generally considered a food for the upper class. By refraining from meat, I will be reminded that I am called to be poor in spirit, asking God instead to give me his true riches.
6. *I will work out/exercise in some form at least five times a week for at least 20 minutes.* By doing this, I will be reminded that my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and can be used by God to do His work.
7. *I will go to bed at a time that will allow me to attain seven hours of sleep per night.* By doing this, my last action of the day will be for God.

*Please note that “alt” refers to an alternative suggestion if the aforementioned practice is incompatible with your family or work.

Lord, I give you my “yes” through my mind...

1. *I will watch only one TV show or movie per week.* When I do watch a TV show/movie, it will be with at least two other people in order that my time may also build community. By doing this, I will be avoiding occasions of distraction and offering my time to God instead.
2. *I will avoid all social media (Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Pinterest, etc.)* By doing this, I will be avoiding occasions of distraction and offering my time to God instead. Exceptions include using the Fiat 40 for Lent Facebook group and searching social media for ideas for work (i.e., a teacher looking for craft ideas on Pinterest).
3. *I will only listen to music, podcasts, books, etc. that glorify God**. This includes but is not limited to praise and worship/Christian music, homily podcasts, and the news (which does not always glorify God but can help us to become informed citizens and stewards of the earth). By doing this, I will be filling my mind with that which is true, good, and beautiful, and orienting my mind to God.
4. *I will not make any unnecessary purchases.* This includes clothes, food, decorations, books, etc. that are not needed for school, work, or daily living. By doing this, I will be avoiding the occasion of greed and cultivate a spirit of gratitude and simplicity.
5. *I will avoid gossiping and complaining.* By doing this, I will be using my speech to glorify God.
6. *I will avoid multi-tasking to the best of my ability.* By doing this, I will be practicing a habit of prioritizing my tasks as well as being present to the people and work that are in front of me.
7. *I will rest on the Sabbath and avoid work as much as possible.* By doing this, I will honor God’s third commandment.

*Please note that “music, podcasts, books, etc. that glorify God” is not limited to specifically Christian/Catholic items.

Lord, I give you my “yes” through my soul...

1. *I will commit to praying the morning prayers included in Fiat 40 every morning.* By doing this, I will begin each day by offering it to God.
2. *I will attend daily mass at least three times a week.* By doing this, I will recognize the immense importance of receiving the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
 - a. *alt. I will attend daily mass on Saturday mornings.*
 - b. This is recognizing that some people’s schedules or locations do not allow for daily mass.
3. *I will pray a daily rosary.* By doing this, I will be calling on our Mother Mary to assist me in this challenge.
4. *I will pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet preferably during the 3 o’clock hour.* By doing this, I will be recalling the hour of Christ’s death and calling upon Him to pour out His mercy over myself and the world.
5. *I will commit to going to a chapel/church each day for at least 20 minutes of prayer and a holy hour on Sunday.* Save for Sunday, this is a separate time from praying the rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet. Reading the Saint bio or gospel, listening to the suggested songs, or journaling would be appropriate during this time. By doing this, I will be setting aside time each day to visit one-on-one with God in His dwelling place.
 - a. *Alt. I will commit to 20 minutes of meditative prayer each day in my home or where I am.* This need not be in one sitting.
6. *I will go to the Sacrament of Confession at least three times (beginning, middle, and end of Lent).* By doing this, I will be recognizing my sinfulness in humility and returning to the Lord for His everlasting mercy.
7. *I will commit to praying the nighttime/bedtime prayers included in Fiat 40 every night.* By doing this, I will end my day in offering to God.

*Please note that while the above list may seem like an overwhelming commitment, the actual time will average out to be about 90 minutes, an hour and a half, each day and may be modified according to your state of life.

About Each Week

For seven weeks, there will be the same format. The eighth week will be the Easter Triduum and altered from the penitential Lenten practices. Below you will find a description of the various aspects of each week. Please note that there are many more Saints and songs that could fit perfectly with Fiat 40 and you are more than welcome to share those with other women or simply add them to your own personal list for reflection.

- **Virtue/Theme**
 - Throughout Lent, we will be exploring and praying with the cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, justice, and courage) followed by the theological virtues (faith, hope, and love) and ending the season with the gift of the Spirit: joy.
 - The definition is provided for each virtue from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).
- **Songs**
 - For each virtue, there are two song suggestions for meditation/reflection that relate and can help to raise our souls to Christ.
 - If you have Spotify, I have created a Spotify playlist with the fourteen songs on it titled “Fiat 40 for Lent” for you to easily find them all.
 - “Singing is praying twice.” – St. Augustine
- **Saints**
 - Included with each virtue will be two Saints that we can reflect on, learn about, and pray with. (Bios mainly taken and edited from Catholic.org)
 - There are two for each week in order that while we are trying to grow in spiritual community with one another, we are also asking for intercession from the community of Saints. Undoubtedly, the two will be in heaven joining to pray for us and with us.
 - “Our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head issues all grace, and the life of the People of God itself.” (CCC 957)
- **Gospel**
 - Sunday’s gospel reading has been included each week along with a few reflection questions to ponder and meditate on during our daily twenty minutes of prayer or whenever you get the chance.
 - Some reflection questions may be centered more on the virtue of the week than the gospel reading. You may pray with these as you see fit.
 - Though repetitive, I encourage you to read the same passage each day throughout the week. The Word is living and has many new things to tell us every time we reread it.

Ash Wednesday: Prudence

Prudence is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. With the help of this virtue, we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid. (CCC 1806)

Songs: *Rest on Us* by Harvest and *Communion* by Maverick City Music

Saints: St. Catherine Laboure and St. Anne, pray for us.

St. Catherine Laboure was born in France on May 2, 1806. When Catherine was nine years old her mother passed away and she took Mary as her mother. A couple years after her mother's death, Catherine had a dream of an old priest motioning her to a room of sick people saying, "It is a good deed to look after the sick. God has designs on you. Do not forget it." Years later, while visiting the Daughters of Charity hospital, Catherine saw a picture of the old priest who turned out to be St. Vincent de Paul, the founder of the Daughters of Charity. Catherine joined the order in January of 1830. Later that year, the Blessed Mother visited Catherine appearing in the image of what we now call "the miraculous medal." She said, "All who wear them will receive great graces." After two years of investigation into the apparitions, the request to duplicate the image was approved and medallions were designed and are now worn all around the world, especially by those who make a consecration to Mary, Mediatrix of Graces. Catherine spent the rest of her life caring for the elderly, sick, and disabled and is the patron saint of the elderly, infirmed, and Miraculous Medal. She died on December 31, 1876 and her feast day is celebrated on November 28th.

"God always speaks to you when you approach him plainly and simply."

"One must see God in everyone."

"I knew nothing. I was nothing. For this reason, God picked me out."

St. Anne is the mother of Mary, Mother of Jesus. Tradition holds that St. Anne, like Hannah of the Old Testament was barren before conceiving Mary with St. Joachim. (Additionally, Catholic dogma holds that Mary was conceived of St. Anne without original sin. We celebrate this Immaculate Conception on December 8th.) Little else is known about St. Anne. She is the patron of many cities, countries, and peoples including unmarried women, women who want to become pregnant, grandmothers, miners, and horseback riders.

"St. Anne, you are my spiritual grandmother! Please pray for me." – Novena to St. Anne

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6; 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples: “Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.”

1. How do you desire your practices of giving alms, praying, and fasting this Lent to change your heart?
2. Though the Father sees what is hidden, He loves to hear it from you. Share with the Father that which is hidden in your heart today.
3. With what decisions in your life this week can you intentionally practice the virtue of prudence?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Week One: Temperance

Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion. (CCC 1809)

Songs: *I Don't Have Much* by Mission House and *In Your Midst* by Allie Paige

Saints: St. Frances of Rome and St. Maria Goretti, pray for us.

St. Frances of Rome was born in 1384 to a noble family. When she was eleven, she knew that she wanted to be a nun. However, her father had already promised her in marriage. Reluctantly, she married Lorenzo Ponziani and was thrust into a world of entertaining and cultivating a social life. It was too much for Frances and she became sick and near death. St. Alexis appeared to her at her weakest and she fully recovered. Afterwards, she opened up to her sister-in-law and the two devoted themselves to the Lord as well as their family obligations. Frances spent the rest of her life caring for the poor and her family through civil war, the Avignon Papacy, and the deaths of two of her children. After her husband died, she started a lay order of women called the Oblates of Mary. She eventually became superior and had the vocation she had desired since the age of eleven. She died in 1440 and is the patron saint of widows and oblates.

"A married woman must, when called upon, quit her devotions to God at the altar to find Him in her household affairs."

"God's will is mine."

St. Maria Goretti was born on October 16, 1890, in Italy. When she was only twelve, her 18-year-old neighbor, Alessandro, tried to rape her. She cried out to him that it was a mortal sin and warned that he would go to hell if he should commit such an act. She fought, but he pulled out a knife and stabbed her eleven times before she was able to flee to the door of the barn. He caught her and stabbed her three more times. She later died in the hospital after forgiving Alessandro for what he had done. She is the patron saint of teenage girls and modern youth.

"He loves; He hopes; He waits. Our Lord prefers to wait Himself for the sinner for years rather than keep us waiting an instant."

"The Holy Eucharist is the perfect expression of the love of Jesus Christ for man."

"Yes, I forgive him and want him to be in Paradise with me some day."

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him. After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: “The is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

1. How do you relate to Jesus being “among the wild beasts” and how do you desire the angels to minister to you?
2. Share with Jesus any ways you need to repent and believe during this Lenten season.
3. In what aspects of your life this week do you need to practice the virtue of temperance?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Week Two: Justice

Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called the “virtue of religion.” Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. (CCC 1807)

Songs: *Clean* by Hillsong UNITED and *Refiner* by Maverick City Music

Saints: Susanna and St. Jane Frances de Chantal, pray for us.

Susanna is a woman of the Old Testament whose story is written in the book of Daniel. Susanna was a beautiful, God-fearing woman married to a man named Joakim. One day while she was bathing in her garden two elders approached her and tried to get her to “lie with them.” She refused and cried out. People came rushing to the garden gate and the elders accused her of lying with a young man who ran away before they could catch him. She was sentenced to death. But Daniel, filled with the Holy Spirit, asked to question the elders further and found out their lie saving Susanna from death. Her story is recounted during the fifth week of Lent.

“It is better for me to fall into your power without guilt than to sin before the Lord.”

“O eternal God, you know what is hidden and are aware of all things before they come to be.”

“...but a daughter of Judah did not tolerate your wickedness.” – Daniel to the elders

St. Jane Frances de Chantal was born on January 28, 1572. Her mother died when Jane was only 18 months old, so her father raised her on his own. At 21, Jane married Baron de Chantal and the two had a beautiful marriage until he was killed in a hunting accident seven years later. Though her husband forgave the man who shot him, Jane had a harder time. She eventually was able to do so and even became godmother to his child. Jane later became friends with future Saint Francis de Sales who became her spiritual director and friend. With Francis’ help, Jane founded the Congregation of the Visitation accepting women who were old or of poor health. On December 13, 1641, Jane died and is remembered as patron saint of forgotten people, in-law problems, loss of parents, and parents separated from their children.

“In prayer, more is accomplished by listening than by talking.”

“In prayer one must hold fast and never let go, because the one who gives up loses all. If it seems that no one is listening to you, then cry out even louder. If you are driven out of one door, go back in by the other.”

“Love flows not from a heart of flesh but from the heart of our will.”

Gospel: Mark 9:2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them. As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

1. How can you relate to Peter in his awe of the Lord? What do you desire the Lord to reveal to you during this Lenten season?
2. Ask the Lord to help you recall a time (or times) when He called you His “beloved daughter” and reflect on His kindness and mercy.
3. How can you practice justice (and mercy) this week? Are there any people in your life whom you need to forgive?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Week Three: Fortitude

Fortitude/Courage is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. (CCC 1808)

Songs: *Rescue* by Lauren Daigle and *Make Room* by The Church Will Sing

Saints: St. Philomena and St. Anastasia, pray for us.

St. Philomena was born around the year 291 in Greece. When she was thirteen, Emperor Diocletian took a liking to her, but she refused to marry him. Because she was a Christian, she was given over to torture, scourging, and drowning. Yet, after every attack, angels healed her. The emperor finally had her beheaded and she died sometime in the year 304. It is believed she died on a Friday at three in the afternoon, just like our Lord, Jesus. She is the patron saint of infants, babies, and youth.

“Whatever you ask from her, she will obtain for you.” – Pope Gregory XVI on St. Philomena

“God will never refuse her anything she asks for us.” – St. John Vianney on St. Philomena

“St. Philomena, powerful with God, pray for us.” – Novena to St. Philomena

St. Anastasia was born in the second century and secretly raised with Christian values by her mother. When her mother died, she was given in marriage by her father to a pagan named Publius. During the persecutions of Diocletian, Anastasia visited and cared for those in prison. It is believed that she was captured and ordered to death at least three times (torture, starvation, and drowning), but miraculously escaped. She was eventually found and burned alive sometime in the third century. She is patron saint of martyrs, weavers, and those suffering from poison.

“Pray for me, that I may be as steadfast in my faith as you were. Pray that I may never waver in my commitment to God, no matter what suffering I might face.” – Novena to St. Anastasia

Gospel: John 2:13-25

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, *Zeal for your house will consume me*. At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken. While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.

1. How can you relate to Jesus' zeal for His Father's house? What ignites your zeal and desire for the Faith? (If nothing arises, ask the Lord to reignite your zeal this Lent.)
2. Share with Jesus and the apostles in heaven how you came to believe in His name and the signs you see Him working today in your life.
3. What relationships, decisions, tasks, attitudes, etc. require you to practice the virtue of fortitude/courage this week?
4. *Lectio Divina*:
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; "take a bite"
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; "chew"
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; "savor"
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; "digest"

Week four: faith

Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because He is Truth itself. (CCC 1814)

Songs: *It is So* by Elevation Worship and *You're Not Finished Yet* by The Belonging Co

Saints: St. Jacinta Marto and St. Catherine of Genoa, pray for us.

Bl. Jacinta Marto was born on March 11, 1910. Together with her brother and cousin, Lucia dos Santos, witnessed three apparitions of an angel and several apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Fatima, Portugal. Mary appeared to the children while they were tending sheep. She asked them to pray the rosary and to save sinners through penance and sacrifice. She also revealed to the children a vision of hell which led to Jacinta and Francisco taking to strict self-mortifications wearing ropes around their waist and giving up music and dancing. At the young age of nine, Jacinta died from the Spanish Flu pandemic. She is the patron saint of people ridiculed for their piety, captives, and sick people.

“More than anything else I want to console Our Lord.”

“If men knew what eternity is, they would do everything to change their lives.” – From Our Lady of Fatima to Bl. Jacinta Marto

“Give my love to Our Lord and Our Lady and tell them that I suffer all they ask of me to convert sinners, and in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.” – Jacinta to her dying brother

St. Catherine of Genoa was born on April 5, 1447 and at age sixteen given in marriage to a nobleman named Giuliano Adorno. The beginning years of her marriage were said to have been filled with misery due to Giuliano’s violent temper and faithlessness. After ten years of marriage, though, she went to confession at the suggestion of her sister, a nun, and had a vision of herself and God which caused her to fall into ecstasy. For the rest of her life, she felt within herself the process of purification akin to what the souls in Purgatory are subjected to. She also lived to see the conversion of her husband and serve the sick in the Hospital of Genoa with him before he died. Catherine died on September 15, 1510 and is the patron saint of brides, childless couples, widows, and difficult marriages.

“In God is my being, my me, my strength, by beatitude, my good, and my delight.”

“God became man in order to make me God; therefore, I want to be changed completely into pure God nourishment, a love without fear.”

“I am so submerged in the sweet fire of love that I cannot grasp anything except [love].”

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, pray for us.

Gospel: John 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

1. How can you relate to Nicodemus who only came to Jesus at night not wanting to be seen in the day? How do you desire to witness to Him throughout your day?
2. Share with Jesus any areas of your life where you are experiencing darkness and invite Him to bring light to those places.
3. In what ways this week can you strive to strengthen your faith in God, His promises, His goodness, His providence, His Word, etc.?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Week five: Hope

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 1817)

Songs: *Help is on the Way* by Amanda Lindsey Cook and *Defender* by Francesca Battistelli

Saints: St. Emily de Vialar and St. Gianna Molla, pray for us.

St. Emily de Vialar was born Anne Marguerite Adelaide Emily de Vialar on September 12, 1797. Her mother died when she was thirteen and she left her school in Paris to take care of her father's household. She began to invite the poor, old, and destitute into their home to take care of them. When her grandfather died, he left her with a considerable fortune which she used to buy a house. She and three companions lived there and a few months later invited others to join. This became the Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, inspired by Matthew 1:20 when an angel appears to Joseph and tells him to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife. St. Emily died on August 24, 1856 and her feast is celebrated on June 17th. She is the patron saint of single women.

"Since God does so much for me, what could I not do for Him?"

"Let us have no other wish than to work for God's glory."

"Love one another." – St. Emily's last words

St. Gianna Molla was born on October 4, 1922 in Milan, Italy. She was a doctor who specialized in mothers, babies, the elderly, and the poor. When she was 33, she married Pietro Molla and had three children in four years. During the first trimester of her fourth pregnancy, a tumor was found in her uterus. The doctors gave her several options including abortion, but she chose to remove the tumor only, asking the doctor to save the baby if it came to choosing. The surgery was successful and both mother and baby lived. However, several months later after giving birth to Gianna Emanuela, St. Gianna died in great pain after exclaiming "Jesus, I love you. Jesus, I love you." She is the patron saint of pregnant mothers and unborn children.

"As to the past, let us entrust it to God's mercy, the future to Divine Providence. Our task is to live holy the present moment."

"Our body is a cenacle, a monstrance: through its crystal the world should see God."

"Love your children. In them you can see Baby Jesus. Pray for them a lot and every day put them under Holy Mary's protection."

Gospel: John 12:20-33

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. “I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

1. How do you feel Jesus drawing you to Himself? How do you desire to draw near to Him still closer?
2. Share with the Lord any sins or bad habits in your life that you need to die to and ask Him to help you to produce good fruit instead.
3. Where does your hope lie today and how can you grow hope in the Lord this week?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Holy Week: Charity

Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. (CCC 1822)

During Holy Week, please read the Sunday reading during your holy hour and then choose different parts of the gospel for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to reflect with. Also make a special effort to attend mass each day during this special week.

Songs: *Alabaster Heart* by Bethel Music and *First Love* by Kari Jobe

Saints: St. Veronica and St. Monica, pray for us.

St. Veronica lived in the first century during the time of Christ. Little is known about her except that she offered a cloth to Jesus so He could wipe His face while on His way to Calvary. After wiping His face, an image of His face was imprinted on the cloth. The cloth is kept at St. Peter's in Rome. Her feast day is celebrated on July 12 and she is patron saint of laundry workers and photographers.

"I ask her (St. Veronica) to pray for the growth of my ability to see Your sacred image in others, to recognize their hurts, to stop and join them on their difficult journeys, and to feel the same compassion for them as she did for You." – Prayer to St. Veronica

St. Monica was born on August 27, 331 in present-day Algeria. She is the mother of St. Augustine (and two other sons who later entered religious life) and was instrumental in his conversion. She also played a huge role in the conversion of her husband. St. Monica prayed for Augustine's conversion for over seventeen years and even followed him from Hippo to Rome and Milan, never losing hope that he would turn to the Lord.

"Above all, dear St. Monica, pray for me, that I may, like your son, turn from my sin and become a great saint for the glory of God." – Novena to St. Monica

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27; 66

Since the Passion reading is so long, I have included a link to the entire passage and have included only a few verses below including ones with pivotal women.
<http://usccb.org/bible/readings/041419.cfm>

When he was in Bethany reclining at table in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil, costly genuine spikenard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head. There were some who were indignant. “Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil? It could have been sold for more than three hundred days’ wages and the money given to the poor.” They were infuriated with her. Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you make trouble for her? She has done a good thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anticipated anointing my body for burial. Amen, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”

At noon darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which is translated, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “Look, he is calling Elijah.” One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink saying, “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down.” Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. These women had followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him. There were also many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

1. How do you relate to the woman who anointed Jesus’ head with oil? In what ways are you doing or desire to do “what she could” for Jesus?
2. Imagine being one of the women at the foot of the cross and tell Jesus honestly how you feel.
3. As we prepare to enter Holy Week, how can you practice charity in intentional ways these next few days?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Easter Triduum: Joy

Joy – a fruit of the Holy Spirit; “The joy of Jesus, a purified joy is a joy that remains. This joy is hidden in some moments in life; we do not feel it in bad times, but it comes later: a joy in hope. May the Lord give us this joy in hope. And a sign that we have this joy in hope is peace. If you have peace, you have the seed of joy that will come later. May the Lord help us understand these things.” – paraphrased from Pope Francis’ homily on May 30, 2014

Christ is Risen (soon)! You are finished with your penitential practices on Thursday of the Triduum, but below are songs, Saints, and the Sunday’s gospel to reflect with (on Easter). Please attend services on Thursday, Friday and, of course, Easter Sunday (or Easter Vigil on Saturday). And make a special effort to do small acts of charity with joy over these three days as a final end to Fiat 40.

Songs: *No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus* by Steffany Gretzinger and *Goodness of God* by Bethel Music

Saints: Mary, Mother of God

Mary, the mother of God, and Mediatrix of All Graces, is the perfect example of how to live as a virtuous woman. Each day she embraces us and (when invited) can teach us how to bear fruit just as she bore the Savior of the World.

“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word.”

“Do whatever He tells you.”

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.” Luke 1:46-55 RSVCE

John 20: 1-9

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don’t know where they put him.” So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb.

They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

1. How does this Easter make you feel? Who are you running to this Easter to celebrate with?
2. Reflect on this text and run to the feet of the risen Lord to share how He has moved your heart.
3. In what ways this Easter Sunday and season can you bring joy to the people you interact with daily?
4. *Lectio Divina:*
 - a. Lectio (reading) – read the passage through; “take a bite”
 - b. Meditation (meditation) – reflect and meditate on a word or phrase that stood out to you; “chew”
 - c. Oratio (pray) – respond in prayer (spontaneous, formal, vocal, or written, etc.) to what God called to your attention; “savor”
 - d. Contemplatio (contemplation) – rest in God and be with Him; “digest”

Morning Prayers

These are to be prayed early in the morning: when you wake up, before you get ready in the morning, while eating breakfast, etc.

1. Morning Offering
2. Magnificat Prayer from the Sisters of Life
3. Five minutes of silence
 - a. Pray spontaneously or listen for God to speak in your heart.
4. End with "(Saints of the week), pray for us."

Morning Offering: O my Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart, for the salvation of souls, the reparation for sins, and the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for all the intentions of our bishops, all the apostles of prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father, the pope, for this month.

Magnificat Prayer: Mary, with your consent to become the Mother of God, torrents of grace poured forth upon the earth, opening up for me a path to follow.

In times of loneliness, (respond with the following after each petition) **Mary be with me.**

In times of turmoil and uncertainty...

In times of grief, loss, or illness...

In times of sadness or depression...

In times of lost plans and broken promises...

When I am anxious about the welfare of my family...

When a job or financial stress weighs heavily on my heart...

When I am discouraged by the weight of my sins...

When I am tempted...

When I am afraid...

When the Lord calls me to greater kindness and love...

When the Lord calls me to greater forgiveness...

When the Lord calls me to greater purity...

On the wings of your Fiat, Mary, I proclaim mine. Together we sing a Magnificat of praise:

For all the blessings in my life, **I praise You, Jesus.**

For all the blessings in my life...

For the gift of today...

For the gift of loved ones...

For the gift of my life...

For creating me with a special purpose and plan...
For never giving up on me...
For Your infinite love...
For never leaving me...
For your inexhaustible mercy...
For laying down Your life for me...
For Your presence in the Eucharist...

For the greater good You will bring out of everything, especially:

In moments when I feel helpless and vulnerable, **I praise You, Jesus.**
In the midst of uncertainty...
In the midst of humiliation...
In the midst of difficulty...
In the midst of what appears as failure...
For sending Your Mother to me in both joyful and sorrowful moments...

With Mary I sing:

The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. Amen.

Night Prayers

These are to be prayed right before going to bed in order that God may be the last thing on your mind before ending your day.

1. Act of Contrition
2. Prayer to St. Michael
3. Examen in five to ten minutes of silence
4. End with “(Saints of the week), pray for us.”

Act of Contrition: O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, My God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life.

Prayer to St. Michael: St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Examen steps:

1. Become aware of God’s presence.
 - Look back on the day in the company of the Holy Spirit and ask for clarity.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
 - Walk through your day giving thanks for all the gifts you received – food, clothes, friends, laughter, sights you saw, etc.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
 - Reflect on how you felt – happy, angry, sad, resentful, etc.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to some particular moment during the day either positive or negative. Look at it and pray about it spontaneously in your heart whether that be praise, repentance, intercession, gratitude, etc.
5. Look toward tomorrow.
 - Ask God to give you courage, strength, light, etc. to take on tomorrow.

Adoration Guide

During Sunday Adoration, start by opening with the Adoration prayer below, affirming your belief in the full presence of Christ in the Eucharist – body, blood, soul, and divinity. For the rest of your time, you may want to pray a rosary, chaplet, read, meditate on the gospel or a saint, or ask the Lord to guide your thoughts to what He has for you. You may want to reflect on the gospel passage for the week and ponder the questions. Additionally, journaling during Sunday Adoration or during your daily 20 minutes is a great way to record and look back on how the Lord has worked through your heart during these 40 days.

Adoration Opening Prayer:

My Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that You are really here in this Sacrament. Night and day, You remain here compassionate and loving. You call, You wait for, You welcome everyone who comes to visit You. I thank You, Jesus my Divine Redeemer for coming upon the earth for our sake and for instituting the Adorable Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in order to remain with us until the end of the world. I thank You for hiding beneath the Eucharistic species Your infinite majesty and beauty, which Your Angels delight to behold, so that I might have courage to approach the throne of Your mercy. I thank You dear Jesus, for having become the priceless Victim, to merit for me the fullness of heavenly favors. Awaken in me such confidence in You that their fullness may descend ever more fruitfully upon my soul. I thank You for offering Yourself in thanksgiving to God for all His benefits, spiritual and temporal which He has bestowed on me. Grant me grace and perseverance in your faithful service. Amen.

Rosary Guide

The rosary may be said at any time during the day. You may also consider praying parts of it at a time if you have only five-minute intervals. Ex. praying one or two decades in the morning and finishing in the afternoon. Below are the four different mysteries to meditate on and a link to a rosary guide.

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/rosaries/how-to-pray-the-rosary.cfm>

Glorious Mysteries (Sundays, Wednesdays, and Solemnities)

1. The Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead
2. The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

Joyful Mysteries (Mondays and Saturdays)

1. The Annunciation of Jesus' Birth
2. The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth
3. The Nativity/Birth of Our Lord, Jesus
4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesdays and Fridays)

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of our Lord, Jesus

Luminous Mysteries (Thursdays)

1. The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration of Jesus
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

Divine Mercy Chaplet Guide

The Divine Mercy Chaplet was given to St. Faustina and is used to pray for God's infinite mercy to be poured out upon the world. It is prayed all over the world, preferably during the "hour of mercy," three in the afternoon on a rosary. Included is another link to a DMC guide.
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-faith/how-to-pray-the-chaplet-of-divine-mercy.cfm>

1. Begin with an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Apostles' Creed on the beads leading up to the connecting (often Marian) medal
2. On the Our Father beads pray the following:
 - a. Verse: Eternal Father, I offer You the body and blood, soul and divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ...
 - b. Response: In atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.
3. On the ten Hail Mary beads pray the following:
 - a. Verse: For the sake of His sorrowful passion...
 - b. Response: Have mercy on us and on the whole world.
4. Conclude with the following three times:
 - a. Together: Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.
5. Optional closing prayer:
 - a. Together: Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion – inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

Confession Guide

During Fiat 40, please attend the sacrament of Reconciliation once a week. You may use this examination of conscience to uncover sins that may have gone unnoticed or to be reminded of areas in your life where you know you struggle and need forgiveness and help. I have included several items for reflection and a link to a more in-depth examination of conscience.

<https://womenofchrist.net/examination-of-conscience-for-adults/>

Steps of Confession:

1. Preparation
 - a. Examine your conscience with proper reflection on your sins.
 - b. You may also think about if you would like to confess face-to-face or behind a screen.
2. Greeting
 - a. Once in the confessional, the priest may greet you or say a short blessing.
3. Opening
 - a. The priest will open with the sign of the cross.
4. Confessing
 - a. You may begin with these or similar words: *Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been (number of days, weeks, months, years) since my last confession.*
 - b. Confess all your sins and when finished you may say these or similar words: *For these and all my sins, I am sorry.*
5. Penance
 - a. The priest will propose an act of penance for you to do after Confession. It may be a prayer(s) or an act of mercy/charity.
 - b. He may also counsel you on how to live a better Christian life.
6. Act of Contrition
 - a. The priest will prompt you to say your prayer which can be found above under "Night Prayers."
7. Absolution
 - a. The priest will extend his hand and pray the words of absolution, thus, cleansing you of your sins. You may respond, "Amen."
8. Dismissal
 - a. The priest will usually praise God and conclude the sacrament. He may say, "Go in peace." To which you may respond, "Thanks be to God."
 - b. You may also want to say thank you before you exit. And then return to the pew to do your penance or to thank God for His mercy.

*Fear not. If it has been a while since your last Confession and you are nervous, you can definitely tell the priest so and he will guide you through it.

Examination of Conscience

Necessary conditions for a sin to be mortal:

1. Serious/grave matter
2. Sufficient reflection
 - a. You know it to be wrong
3. Full consent of the will
 - a. You freely choose it

Have I been obedient to God by following the **Ten Commandments**?

1. I am the Lord thy God. You shall not have false gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's good.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I neglected to do the following when asked of me?

The Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- Admonish sinners
- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Comfort the sorrowful
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive all injuries
- Pray for the living and the dead

The Corporal Works of Mercy:

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Visit the imprisoned
- Give shelter to the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Bury the dead

Have I allowed any of these sins to grow in my heart and manifest in my actions?

The Seven Deadly Sins:

- Pride
- Envy
- Lust
- Anger
- Gluttony
- Sloth
- Greed