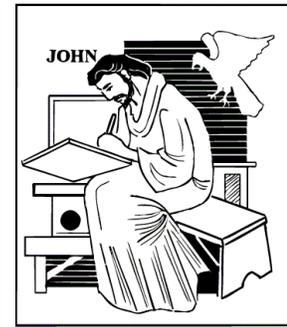
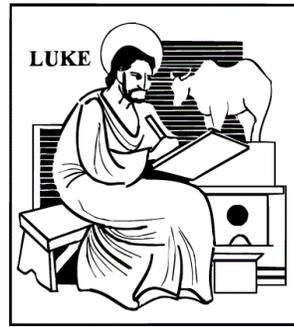
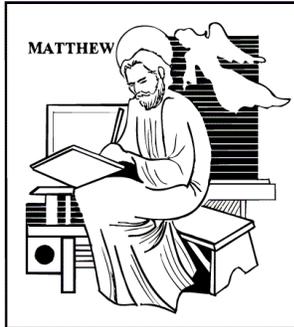


## Breaking Open the Word



### March 15, 2015 - Fourth Sunday of Lent Gospel Jn 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.

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**Spiritual Reflection:** Helen Alexander wrote this about Jesus' life in her book *Experiencing Bereavement*: In Jesus' life on earth we see God caring deeply about the things that make human being hurt—sickness, being a social outcast, being lost. In his life, his ministry, and his death, Jesus shows us a God who is with us in our pain, and who knows our being at its very worst. The message of Jesus is a simple one: heal the sick, accept the outcast, and find the lost. In other words, love one another, just as your Father in heaven loves you. Time after time, though, that message is ignored, and some of the most tragic sequences in human history have resulted—not from a vengeful God determined to punish his erring people, but from our own willfulness and selfishness. Suffering is not the opposite of love, but rather an integral and productive part of it. So let us value life—all of it. Life is a gift from God.

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### Spiritual Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus came?
2. How would you describe Jesus' coming to another?
3. Why do people prefer the dark?
4. How Jesus like a light in the darkness?
5. Describe the story of the serpent in the desert.