



# MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED!

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MARCH, 01 2020 / 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

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## Spiritual Ponderings:

### Trust 1

Trust Life is like a rollercoaster in the sense that it seems to have a lot of twists and turns that keep things interesting. There is something about life that is both exciting and scary at the same time – much like riding a rollercoaster (or at least I have been told since I am too scared to ride a rollercoaster). Despite my fear of rollercoasters, I do think riding a rollercoaster is a great image of life. When a person gets into a rollercoaster, he or she is trusting three people. They are trusting the architect who designed the rollercoaster, the person who seatbelts them in, and the mechanic who is working behind the scenes to make sure everything is working correctly. In a similar way, we need to trust God the Father, who designed our life, the Son who belts us in through the Sacraments, and the Holy Spirit who is like the mechanic working behind the scenes making sure the Father's plan will come about. The following quote from Stephen Covey really caught my attention: "Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships." Faith life is all about developing a relationship with God so developing my trust in God can only make my relationship with God better.

A few months ago, I was looking for a spiritual book to read and I came across Stephen M.R. Covey's book called *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything*. I found some great insights into the idea of trust and ways to improve my relationship with God. I would like to share with you some of the insights that I have gained from reading this book. Quotes from the book will be in bold my commentary in normal type. Stephen M.R. Covey is the son of Stephen R. Covey There is one thing that is common to every individual, relationship, team family, organization, nation, economy, and civilization throughout the world—one thing which, if removed, will destroy the most powerful government, the most successful business, the most thriving economy, the most influential leadership, the greatest friendship, the strong character, the deepest love. On the other hand, if developed and leveraged, that one thing has the potential to create unparalleled success and prosperity in every dimension of life. Yet, it is the least understood, most neglected, and most underestimated possibility of our time. That one thing is trust.

If we look at the story of Adam and Eve, we see that the first sin was committed because Adam and Eve did not trust that God wanted what was best for them. They believed that God was holding back on them despite the fact that God had given them everything. Once they doubted God, great damage occurred in the relationship between God and human beings. Jesus brings about salvation in some ways by demonstrating trust in the Father's will. Every relationship needs the people in the relationship to learn to trust each other. Trust is definitely one thing that separates good relationships from bad ones. I think it is safe to say the more I trust someone the deeper our relationship can go. If I don't trust you then I will not share myself with you and therefore our relationship will stall. If you do not trust me then our relationship will also stall.

Trust impacts us 24/7, 365 days a year. It undergirds and affects the quality of every relationship, every communication, every work project, every business venture, every effort in which we are engaged. It changes the quality of every present moment and alters the trajectory and outcome of every future moment of our lives—both personally and professionally. Imagine how different our world would be today if everyone trusted each other and everyone was worthy of trust. A world without lies would also be a world of peace. I also have to admit to myself that every time I sin, I do so because I do not trust God. I do not believe that God wants what is best for me and therefore I

do things my way instead of God's way. If I trusted that God knew what was best for me, I would always do what God wanted me to do and thus I would never sin. Instead, I sometimes think God is using me and therefore I rebel against God's loving guidance. Mary and Joseph trusted in the Lord and Jesus came into the world. Zachariah did not trust and he was left speechless. We can increase trust—much faster than we might think—and doing so will have a huge impact, both in the quality of our lives and in the results we're able to achieve. In becoming a more trustworthy person and looking at what it means to be trustworthy, I think we can improve our relationship with God and with others.

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## BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

**March 01 2020 / First Sunday of Lent / Lectionary: 22 / Gospel MT 4:1-11**

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: *One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.*" Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: *He will command his angels concerning you and with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*" Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: *The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.*" Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

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**Spiritual Reflection:** Jesus invites us to accompany Him on a journey. Are you willing to walk with him?

**Spiritual Questions:**

1. Is God enough for you to be happy?
2. How does Jesus help you avoid sin?
3. What mess that sins causes when you give into temptation?
4. How do you silence temptations in your life?
5. How does sin affect other people in your life?



## Thought of the Day

**Sunday**

Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms. Laying down your arms, surrendering, saying you are sorry, realizing that you have been on the wrong track and getting ready to start life over again from the ground floor—that is the only way out of a "hole." This process of surrender—this movement full speed ahead—is repentance. - C. S. Lewis

**Monday**

Your first task is to be dissatisfied with yourself, fight sin, and transform yourself into something better. Your second task is to put up with the trials and temptations of this world that will be brought on by the change in your life and to persevere to the very end in the midst of these things. - Saint Augustine

**Tuesday**

St. Augustine and St. Thomas define mortal sin to be a turning away from God: that is, the turning of one's back upon God, leaving the Creator for the sake of the creature. What punishment would that subject deserve who, while his king was giving him a command, contemptuously turned his back upon him to go and transgress his orders? This is what the sinner does; and this is punished in hell with the pain of loss, that is, the loss of God, a

punishment richly deserved by him who in this life turns his back upon his sovereign good. -  
Alphonsus Liguori

**Wednesday**

I would rather die than do something which I know to be a sin, or to be against God's will. - Joan  
of Arc

**Thursday**

Sin is not hurtful because it is forbidden, but it is forbidden because it is hurtful. - Benjamin  
Franklin

**Friday**

It is impossible for a man to be freed from the habit of sin before he hates it, just as it is  
impossible to receive forgiveness before confessing his trespasses. - Ignatius of Antioch

**Saturday**

Sometimes we are saddened by the weight of our sins. May we not be discouraged. Christ has  
come to lift this burden and give us peace. - Pope Francis

## PRO-LIFE



**March 2020**

### **Prayer for People to Answer the Call to be People of Justice**

God of life and love, you created us in your image and sent your Son to bring us life. Instill in us a respect for all life, from conception to natural death. Empower us to work for justice for the poor. Nourish us that we may bring food to the hungry. Inspire us to cherish the fragile life of the unborn. Strengthen us to bring comfort to the chronically ill. Teach us to treat the aging with dignity and respect. Bring us one day into the glory of everlasting life. We ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Eternal and merciful Father, I give you thanks for the gift of Your Divine Son who suffered, died and rose from the dead for all people. I thank You also for my Catholic Faith and ask Your help that I may grow in fidelity by prayer, by works of charity, and by Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

Inspired by confidence in Your power to move hearts and by the success of prayer, I pray for (N) who no longer share(s) in the intimate life of your

Catholic family. Grant through my prayer and witness that (she/he/they) may be open to the promptings of the HOLY SPIRIT to return to the loving union with Your people. Grant also that my prayer be ever hopeful and that I may never judge another, for You alone can read hearts. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



## **St. Monica Society**

*Please join us in praying a special  
prayer each month for Catholics  
who have fallen away from their  
faith.*

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## **Catholic Prayers**

### **Lenten Prayer for Transformation**

Loving Father, I invite you into my life today and make myself available to you. Help me to become the-best-version-of-myself by seeking your will and becoming a living example of your love in the world. Open my heart to the areas of my life that need to change in order for me to carry out the mission and experience the joy you have imagined for my life. Inspire me to live the Catholic faith in ways that are dynamic and engaging. Show me how to best get involved in the life of my parish. Make our community hungry for best practices and continuous learning. Give me courage when I am afraid, hope when I am discouraged, and clarity in times of decision. Teach me to enjoy uncertainty and lead your Church to become all you imagined it would be for the people of our times. Amen.

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# Humor

Lent is for amateurs. I don't need a divine rationalization to give up.

A rabbi, a priest and a minister walk into a bar. - The bartender looks up and says, "What is this, a joke?"