



The Catholic Community of Divine Savior

Family Faith Focus

Volume 9, Issue 34

March 21, 2021

Dates to Remember

- March 20: 4:00 PM Mass
- March 21 9:00 AM Mass
- Please see our parish website for reservation information and links to view Sunday or weekday Masses online.

The Gift of God's Grace

Jesus is aware that it's not easy to live the commandments in an all encompassing way. That is why he offers us the help of his love. He came into the world not only to fulfill the Law, but also to give us his grace, so that we can do God's will, loving him and our brothers and sisters. We can do everything, everything, with the grace of God! Indeed, holiness is none other than guarding God's freely given grace. It is a matter of trusting and entrusting ourselves to God, to God's grace, to the freedom that God has given us, and welcoming the hand God constantly extends to us, so that our efforts and our necessary commitment can be sustained by God's help, overflowing with goodness and mercy. — Pope Francis

Fifth Sunday of Lent

John 12: 20-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Sunday Gospel Connection: March 21, 2021

The Fifth Sunday of Lent, Cycle B

John 12: 20-33

Gospel Background: Today's Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of John. We are reading much further into John's Gospel than we have for the past two weeks. Chapter 12 of John's Gospel is a preparation for the beginning of the passion narrative to follow. Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead—an important sign in John's Gospel, which inspired many people to believe in Jesus. This event also marks the turning point in Jesus' conflict with the Jewish authorities. John's Gospel tells us that the Sanhedrin met after this event and made plans to kill Jesus. In the 12th chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus is anointed at Bethany and enters Jerusalem in triumph. We again see evidence of the significance of the raising of Lazarus to this event; John reports that the crowds also gathered to see Lazarus.



Following his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus predicted his suffering, death, and Resurrection and prepared his disciples to believe in the salvation that his death would accomplish. Using the metaphor of the grain of wheat, Jesus presented the idea that his dying would be beneficial. He also taught that those who would be his disciples must follow his example of sacrifice. This theme will be repeated in John's account of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as an example of how they must serve one another.

The final section of today's Gospel might be read as John's parallel to the agony in the garden. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John does not record Jesus' anguished prayer in the garden of Gethsemane before his arrest. Although comparable words are found in today's reading, Jesus gives a confident response to the question he raises when asking God to save him from his impending death. After announcing his conviction that it is for this purpose that he came, a voice from heaven speaks, as if in answer to Jesus' prayer. This voice, like the one heard at Jesus' baptism and at Jesus' Transfiguration—events reported in the Synoptic Gospels but not in John's Gospel—affirms that God welcomes the sacrifice that Jesus will make on behalf of others. In John's Gospel, Jesus teaches that this voice was sent for the sake of those who would believe in him.

In today's Gospel, we also hear Jesus speak about the cosmic framework against which we are to understand his passion, death, and Resurrection. Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus conquered Satan, the ruler of this world. In this way the world is judged, but the judgment is not condemnation. Instead, through Jesus' dying and rising, salvation is brought to the world.

Family Connection: Family life is often a balancing act in which we prioritize and attend to a variety of competing needs. We learn the value of putting others' needs ahead of our own. In family life we also learn that when we make personal sacrifices to serve others, we gain so much more than we may have lost.

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As you gather as a family, talk about how important it is to your family life to gladly serve one another. Ask each person to consider the last time that another family member asked for help. What was your response? Did you cheerfully try to honor the request, or did you ask “Why me?” Read today's Gospel, John 12:20-33. How do you think Jesus would want us to respond when someone in our family asks for help? Invite each family member to make a commitment for the next week to try to respond cheerfully to requests for help. Pray together, asking God's help with this commitment. Pray the Prayer of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

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For more information and Sunday Connection resources visit:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/fifth-sunday-of-lent-cycle-b-sunday-connection/>

Sucipe Prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all I have and call my own. You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me. Amen.

Missionary Childhood Association — Lenten Almsgiving

The Missionary Childhood Association (formerly the Holy Childhood Association) is one of the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Universal Church. Begun in France in 1843 by Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson, the MCA today continues Bishop Forbin-Janson's vision of “children helping children” in the poorest places in our world through their prayers and financial sacrifices.



Each year our FCFF students are encouraged to practice the discipline of almsgiving or charity during the season of Lent. Unfortunately, this year we are not able to distribute the mission banks provided by the Missionary Childhood Association, but we hope that our FCFF children will still continue participating in this Lenten almsgiving program. Perhaps you and your children can make your own mission bank this year or designate a container that you have as a mission bank for your children's offerings for the MCA.

While there is no obligation to participate in this Lenten almsgiving program, we encourage our students to participate generously again this year and to pray for children throughout the world who are less fortunate.

MCA Lenten Almsgiving Donations may be returned to the parish office anytime during Holy Week, March 28 – April 3, or during Easter Week, April 4 - 10. We are very proud of how generous our children and young persons continue to be each year in their mission bank almsgiving. Even with the pandemic that began during Lent last year, we were still able to send a check in the amount of \$200.37 to the Missionary Childhood Association. We are grateful to all who participated!

St. Joseph Pray for us!



Since we are unable to host a Table this year, we still would like to help out those who are in great need. The pandemic has increased the demand for basic human needs such as food and toiletries. Every week, you have been hearing about the plight of the food pantry at St. Eulalia and the increased need for food.

In the spirit of St. Joseph, we are taking a collection in his honor. All monetary donations received will go toward purchasing non-perishable foods to help stock the St. Eulalia food pantry.

How can you donate?

Through the end of March, 2021, here are ways to donate.

- 1) A donation box will be in back of the church;
- 2) Mail a check payable to Divine Savior and make a note on it for St. Joseph.
- 3) Go to church website and click on the Caravan of Care Go Fund Me page.
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/CaravanOfCareHelp>

We thank you for your generosity.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



Transform Us

Loving God,
through all the ages you create new life
and see that it is good.
Having given us all good gifts,
you gave more: you gave yourself,
doing something completely new
from the moment of Mary's yes.

You transform even death, pain,
and suffering.
You transform endings into beginnings,
buried seeds to fruitful plants.
Transform us, help us to follow where
you lead,
that we might live with you forever.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 21, 2021

The Grain of Wheat



Today's readings: Jeremiah 31:31–34; Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 14–15; Hebrews 5:7–9; John 12:20–33. After triumphantly entering Jerusalem, Jesus knows that his passion is imminent. He also knows that no one around him expects what is about to occur. Jesus uses the image of a seed to help his friends to understand.

“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.” Like the seed, Jesus will die. Like the seed, Jesus will bear much fruit, eternal life given to each one of us. His death, when he is “lifted up from the earth” on the cross, “will draw everyone” to him.

When a seed is planted, the seed coat breaks apart as the plant within it begins to grow and develop. The seed itself ceases to exist in a meaningful way. From the beginning, though, the prospect of new life, the germ, was within the seed. Jesus recognized that his life had to be laid down for the potentiality of eternal life to come to fulfillment.

Through Jesus, the germ of eternal life exists in us as well. He tells us that discipleship entails imitating him. We have to let the seed of our current life break apart for the new plant to grow.

Journal about the experience of letting go of your old life in order to nurture the new.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 22

Neither Do I Condemn You

The woman caught in adultery expected to die. Instead, she hears, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin any more.” What must she have felt in that moment, to be forgiven? This same forgiveness is available to us every time we ask for it. God’s mercy is always there, sometimes we just need to celebrate it. Examine your conscience. No one is perfect. Receive the sacrament of reconciliation and you will feel the full force of God’s merciful love. *Today’s readings: Daniel 13:1–9, 15–17, 19–30, 33–62 or 13:41c–62; Psalm 23:1–3a, 3b–4, 5, 6; John 8:1–11.*

Tuesday, March 23

God’s Voice

As Holy Week nears, spend five to ten minutes in silence reflecting on God’s presence and action in your life. When did you hear God’s voice today? When did you feel calm and peaceful? When did you feel that you did not live up to what God was calling you to do? How can you adjust your life to be more open to God’s will? *Today’s readings: Numbers 21:4–9; Psalm 102:2–3, 16–18, 19–21; John 8:21–30.*

Wednesday, March 24

Uncomfortable Truth

God spoke to Abraham and Abraham believed. The trust Abraham had in God, the keeper of promises, sets him apart. Jesus contrasts Abraham’s trust, his belief in the truth, with the reaction Jesus faces as he teaches and preaches. Truth can be uncomfortable. Maybe you have been with a small child who, unburdened with lessons about politeness, describes a situation with embarrassing accuracy. Those situations pass in a moment. The truth to which Jesus testified had the power to discomfort more deeply, but he tells us “the truth will set you free.” What can that mean in your life? *Today’s readings: Daniel 3:14–20, 91–92, 95; Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; John 8:31–42.*

Thursday, March 25

Annunciation of the Lord

A young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel, meaning “God is with us.” The words of Isaiah carry us to the house of Mary in Nazareth, where a young girl is addressed as “favored one.” She is troubled, and the angel tells her not to be afraid. The young girl is not afraid. Her words will change history: “May it be done to me according to your word.” From the moment of Mary’s yes, God began to do something completely new in the world. Mary’s vocation is unique, yet her response, her yes, is something we are able to imitate. Pray the Rosary today, and ask for Mary’s intercession that you might be more like her to answer with a brave yes to God’s call. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 7:10–14, 8:10; Psalm 40:7–8a, 8b–9, 10, 11; Hebrews 10:4–10; Luke 1:26–38.*

Friday, March 26

A New Way

Jesus finds himself in trouble with the authorities again and again because the kingdom of God, which he came to inaugurate, did not adhere to the expectations of the people. Jesus stood with those who lacked power, authority, and status, and in the Beatitudes, he tells us that standing alongside them is standing with him. How can you embrace those on the margins? *Today’s readings: Jeremiah 20:10–13; Psalm 18:2–3a, 3bc–4, 5–6, 7; John 10:31–42.*

Saturday, March 27

God Transforms

Approaching Holy Week, the readings show the plot against Jesus growing stronger. The plot against Jesus was about self-preservation, yet Caiaphas’ words unwittingly testify to what God was doing: “He prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God.” *Today’s Readings: Ezra 37:21–28; Jeremiah 31:10, 11–12abcd, 13; John 11:45–56.*

