

Sunday, Mar 22, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT; SECOND SCRUTINY OF THE ELECT

Clarity at last

Darkness and light are biblical themes that invite us to take an internal sight exam. How clearly do we see? Like the man in today's gospel, we're all born blind into a world grown accustomed to the blurred vision of habitual sin. We view most decisions in terms of what's in it for us. It's difficult and challenging to climb up to a higher point of view to ask: What will serve the common good? Today, we pray that our Elect will have the grace to seek and attain that higher ground. And might we too ask for the same?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41 (31). *"What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?"*

Monday, Mar 23, 2020

MEMORIAL OF TURIBIUS OF MOGROVEJO, BISHOP

Step down to your calling

God must have a great sense of irony. Imagine the head of an important court suddenly being summoned to pastor a far-off land filled with people who speak unknown languages. Such was the destiny of Turibius of Mogrovejo, summoned from his post as chief inquisitor in Granada, Spain to pastor the Lima archdiocese, which included the indigenous Andean communities of 16th-century colonial Peru. Turibius went with the flow admirably, traversing his vast archdiocese three times on foot, alone, ministering to all along his route. He defended those who suffered the greatest injustice under the colonial rule he himself represented. Downward mobility is a pattern in saints' biographies. Time to evaluate your priorities?

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54 (244). *"He and his whole household came to believe."*

Tuesday, Mar 24, 2020

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Be a voice for the voiceless

Saint Oscar Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador who spoke out against grave social injustice in El Salvador, was assassinated by his opponents while celebrating Mass on this day in 1980, and it is commemorated by the United Nations as International Day for the Right to the Truth. Today is an opportunity for you to honor the memory of human rights victims, pay tribute to those who struggle to protect those rights for all, remember the important work of Romero, and commit yourself to his values of speaking truth to power, even when it costs you.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16 (245). *"Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you."*

Wednesday, Mar 25, 2020

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Say yes to God

The Annunciation is a beautiful feast that celebrates Mary's "yes" to God during her encounter with the angel Gabriel. Mary doesn't rattle off a quick response but rather pauses and ponders, wondering what this might mean. Her response is a choice not simply to give birth to a child, but to fully embrace her identity and her calling as an intimate companion with God. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord." It is as if Mary is saying, "Look! My

life is fully in God! Everything about who I am is for and with God!" During this day of Annunciation, reflect on your daily "yeses." How do these reflect your own identity and life in God?

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38 (545). *"Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'"*

Thursday, Mar 26, 2020

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Reflect in your heart

Imagine taking a walk with the Lord today. As you walk along, he suddenly stops and looks at you with a question in his eyes. He hesitates, but then goes ahead and asks: "Do you have the love of God in your heart?" You might respond: "I am doing my best to be patient, to think of others first, to be kind and generous. It is Lent after all." Jesus persists: "But do you have the love of God in your heart?" Take five minutes today and consider that question. Be at peace with whatever thoughts come to mind. Then allow the insights you gain to set the rest of the day's course.

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 32:7-14; John 5:31-47 (247). *"It is simply that I know you and you do not have the love of God in your hearts."*

Friday, Mar 27, 2020

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

What price would you pay?

Today's gospel has an aura of doom about it, with Jesus getting a clear message that authorities would like to kill him. The church teaches that "Jesus went up to Jerusalem voluntarily, knowing well that there he would die a violent death because of the opposition of sinners," as the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it (569). How far are you willing to go to "do the right thing"? Contemplate today the sacrifices you have made and what you would be willing to do to be true to your beliefs.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30 (248). *"Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, 'Is he not the one they are trying to kill?'"*

Saturday, Mar 28, 2020

LENTEN WEEKDAY

The plot thickens

Next weekend we observe Palm Sunday, ushering in a dramatic week that includes the tragedy of Our Lord's suffering and death. The gospels describe for us the suspicion and plotting that will lead to his Crucifixion. Among the religious leaders, only Nicodemus gives Jesus the benefit of the doubt and tries to argue his case. This is the same Nicodemus who has already visited Jesus under cover of night to discuss his teachings and who provides the burial spices after Jesus is crucified. How can you be Nicodemus in situations where others are subject to suspicion and suffering?

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53 (249). *"I, like a trusting lamb led to slaughter, had not realized that they were hatching plots against me."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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