

Sunday, Mar 21, 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

See inside for more information

Sometimes your reputation precedes you. The prophet Jeremiah is famous for lamentations, but he is less known for the centerpiece of his message: that everything we need to know about how to live is already planted in our hearts. On this International Forest Day, let's not miss the forest for the trees on another great truth rooted deeply in our midst. Trees are friends: bearing fruit, shade, and beauty wherever they're planted. They are also necessary allies in achieving planetary sustainability, food security, and poverty eradication. Play your part in protecting God's greenery.

TODAY'S READINGS: Year B: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33 (35). *"I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts."*

Monday, Mar 22, 2021

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Tap into the virtues of water

As part of its observance of the 2020 World Water Day, the Vatican published *Aqua fons vitae. Orientations on water: symbol of the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth*. The document, meant to support the human right to clean water, reminds us that "by means of the water made holy by the Spirit," God gives us life and renews us. The way we respect water is an indicator of how we are "taking care of the early garden" entrusted to us. In observance of World Water Day, educate yourself and others about the challenges the world faces in ensuring access to clean water: the holy source of all life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11 (251). *"Go, and from now on do not sin any more."*

Tuesday, Mar 23, 2021

MEMORIAL OF TURIBIUS OF MOGROVEJO, BISHOP

To reveal Christ, go the distance

In 2018, Pope Francis met with the bishops of Peru, invoking the patron saint of Latin American bishops—Turibius of Mogrovejo. "This holy bishop is frequently portrayed as a 'new Moses,'" said the pope. "The Vatican has a picture in which Saint Turibius appears crossing a great river whose waters open before him like the Red Sea, so that he could get to the other shore, where numerous native peoples awaited him." Turibius cast aside life in Spain to live among native Peruvians. What can you cast aside so others might see Christ in you?

TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30 (252). *"Their patience worn out by the journey, the people complained against God and Moses."*

Wednesday, Mar 24, 2021

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Be transformed by justice

This is an anniversary of martyrdom. The archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero, was murdered on this day in 1980 as he presided at Mass in the chapel of a church-run hospital for cancer patients and the terminally ill. Romero, an unassuming man who in earlier years had ministered to the country's elite, experienced a late-in-life transformation that took him from quiet acceptance of the status quo to courageous critic of his government's repression of the poor. His weekly sermons championed justice, challenged

the government, and eventually cost him his life: "It is not the will of God for some to have everything and for others to have nothing," he said. "It is not enough to attend Mass on Sunday . . . God wants the garment of justice. God wants his Christians dressed in love." Begin to dress the part by questioning the "way we always do things."

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; John 8:31-42 (253). *"If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

Thursday, Mar 25, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Prepare to say yes

Today we celebrate the Annunciation, that famous conversation between the angel Gabriel and Mary, in which Mary embraced what must have been the frightening prospect of bearing the Son of God. Mary's yes is seen as the model for all Christians in response to our individual callings, and in response to everyday choices to do what is most loving, moral, and just. Perhaps today you will be called to make a choice for faithfulness; prepare yourself now to say yes to God, as did Mary.

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.'"*

Friday, Mar 26, 2021

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

Meet violence with hope

Violence has made an all-too-comfortable home in our lives. It's in our TV shows and movies, our politics, our streets, and even our own hearts. In a pastoral message on violence in 1994, the U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote, "Hostility, hatred, despair, and indifference are at the heart of a growing culture of violence." How do we meet these experiences with compassion and offer a safe place for peace? "The path to a more peaceful future is found in a rediscovery of personal responsibility, respect for human life and human dignity, and a recommitment to social justice. The best antidote to violence is hope."

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42 (255). *"[They] picked up rocks to stone Jesus."*

Saturday, Mar 27, 2021

LENTEN WEEKDAY

The long history of judicial corruption

We learn more each day about inequities in our judicial system. Justice, it seems, is more often praised than practiced, especially when it comes to treatment of minorities and those who challenge authority. We could include Jesus in the long list of victims of injustice. At this moment in Lent, as we prepare to enter Holy Week, the wheels of injustice are set in motion by Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest who will play a key role in the coming execution of the prophet of Peace. Pray today for forgiveness for the injustices committed in our names, and in our hearts.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56 (256). *"So from that day on they planned to kill him."*

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



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