

OLM Parish Family  
Health Ministry Lenten Program  
"Walk with Jesus on the Road to Jerusalem"



### **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Readings: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

*"Miracles happen but prayer is needed! Prayer that is courageous, struggling and persevering, not prayer that is a mere formality".*

*Pope Francis - Twitter, May 24, 2013*

### **Reflection**

Today is the Fifth Sunday of Lent. In the three gospels, we hear about the raising of Lazarus (Jn 11:1-45), Jesus speaks of his coming death (Jn 12:20-33), and the story of the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1-11). Jesus teaches us that we all must rise from our sin to new life. He says, "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" (Jn 12:24). The raising of Lazarus was a sign of this. He was not resurrected as Jesus was, but nonetheless, he was resuscitated. It points to Jesus' rising and the power of Christ to raise us up out of our sin to new life. The woman caught in adultery was also raised to a new life. Jesus' love and immense mercy saved her physically and, more important, forgave her and gave her new life. In Pope Francis's words above, he stresses the miraculous power in prayer. Parents pray many sorts of prayers. At times, the prayers are expressed from our hearts with ease. At other times, we struggle to speak to God from our hearts when we or our children are suffering in some way. Yet we know that we need to persevere in our prayers to a loving God who knows what is best for our hearts and souls. Jesus never said that this life will be easy. In fact, our Lord told us that we need to pick up our crosses and follow him. Let's be sure our prayers do not become a mere formality. Let's endeavor to get to know our Lord more intimately so we can more freely share our hearts with him. God will grant us the graces to walk in faith courageously each day.

### **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, forgive us for our laziness in prayer. Help us to put our hearts into our conversations with you.

### **Fasting**

Today, fast from rushing through prayers and spiritual studies.

### **Almsgiving**

Give time to our Lord today. You decide what that will consist of.

### **Intention**

Pray for those who do not know God.

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, forgive my apathy at times.

I want my heart to grow more in love with you each day

### **Faith Journey Questions**

1. When in my life have I been in the depths of anguish and distress and cried out to God to help me? What happened?
2. What things, habits, relationships or compulsions keep me from growing closer to God?
3. In what ways has my prayer, my attitudes or my relationship with God and others changed since the beginning of Lent? What still needs to be changed in my life in order to be closer to God?

### **Lenten Challenge**

If someone misunderstands you or objects to your actions, treat them with compassion and mercy instead of retaliation.

### **Lent Quiz**

What is the large white cloth placed over a coffin at a funeral Mass?

(Extra credit if you know the why!)

### **Prayer for Sundays of Lent**

Heavenly Father, as I enter this last week of my Lenten journey, guide me to the path that leads to you. Fill my heart with gratitude, patience, strength and peace as I strive to become the-best-version-of-myself, honestly admitting my shortcoming and sins. As I renew my resolve each day to become a better person, let me hear your voice in the deepest reaches of my heart. Give me rest in you. Help me to accept others, showing them your great love instead of casting judgment. Stay with me through the busy days this week and remind me that when I need comfort, solitude, wisdom or guidance, I can always turn to you. Help me develop discipline and generosity through fasting and almsgiving, and come closer to you through prayer this Lent. In your name I pray, Amen.



## **Fifth Week of Lent - Monday** - *John 8:1-11*

*"If in the work you have difficulties and you accept them with joy, with a big smile - in this like in any other thing - they will see your good works and glorify the Father".*

*St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

### **Reflection**

Sometimes Mother Teresa's advice seems overly simple or impossible to follow. But because she was a woman of deep faith and possessed a strong spirit, she based all of her teachings on a solid prayer life. You may not be able to smile when your washing machine is overflowing, your child is throwing up and the dog is barking because the neighbor kids are ringing the doorbell - all at once. It would seem hardly a time to smile or to be joyful. Yet Mother Teresa knew from experience that it was not only doable, but that it was also extremely beneficial. Why waste tears or time grumbling? Why not instead offer the problems and challenges to God and ask for his grace to deal with them? While it's true we may not feel that smile broadening across our faces initially when things go wrong, with time and prayer and a better idea of the bigger picture, we can understand that we are indeed a living example to our families in how we conduct ourselves within the nitty-gritty details of everyday life. And further, hidden within the joy is the secret of eternal salvation for us and our families. It starts with a smile!

### **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Lord, help us to find joy in each day no matter what is happening.

### **Fasting**

Today, fast from saying negative things; instead pause and think of something nice to say.

### **Almsgiving**

Count your blessings - to actually sit down with paper and pencil/pen/crayon and jot down all of the good things in your life.

### **Intention**

Pray for those who feel unloved or forgotten.

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help me to be your instrument of love and care.

### **Lenten Challenge**

Try to be an example of joy to each and every person with who you interact with today.

### **Lent Quiz**



What was Jesus' first miracle?

### **Fifth Week of Lent - Tuesday** - John 8:21-30

*"It was the last evening of his earthly life and in the Upper Room, Jesus was about to offer the best morsel to Judas, the traitor. He thought back to this phrase in the Psalm ("Even my friend, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has turned against me" - Psalm 41:10), which is indeed the supplication of a sick man, abandoned by his friends. In this ancient prayer, Christ found the words and sentiments to express his own deep sorrow".*

*St. John Paul II, General Audience, June 2, 2004*

### **Reflection**

Do we endeavor to offer the "best morsel" to our enemy? I don't think so. Jesus did so with Judas in the upper room. In reality, we are more apt to save the best morsel for ourselves. Take some time and ponder how you can think less of yourself and more of someone else. Talk together with your family, children, friends about sharing and caring for one another's salvation. (Don't be afraid to reward someone for their generous behavior with big warm hugs!)

### **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us focus more on others than on ourselves.

### **Fasting**

Fast today from your favorite pastime or treat.

### **Almsgiving**

Give the "best morsel" to someone else today.

### **Intention**

Pray for children (and adults) all around the world to continue to grow to be amazing Christians

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us share our "best morsels" with others.

### **Lenten Challenge**

Try to find out about someone from a poorer country/state/town, and imagine what it would be like to swap lives - even just for a day.

### **Lent Quiz**



Which apostle did Jesus favor at the Last Supper with a morsel of bread dipped in the wine?

### **Fifth Week of Lent - Wednesday - John 8:31-42**

*"Time is the messenger of God: God saves us in time, not in a moment. At times he works miracles, but in everyday life he saves us through time. Sometimes we think that if the Lord comes into our life, he will change us. Yes, we do change: it is called conversion. But he does not act like "a fairy with a magic wand". No. He gives you the grace and he says, as he said to everyone he healed: 'Go, walk'."*

*Pope Francis- Homily, Domus Sanctae Marthae, April 12, 2013*

### **Reflection**

Life in the family is filled with unexpected blessings. Some are in the form of experiences that we might prefer not to have. Others are comprised of profound joy. With God's grace, they can all be amazing opportunities for conversion and spiritual growth. Conversion is not a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It happens every day. We need to "go, walk" closer and closer to heaven each day by putting one foot in front of the other in faith, not expecting a magic wand to get us there.

### **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us to walk in faith each day closer to you.

### **Fasting**

Today, fast from doubt, negativity and even complacency.

### **Almsgiving**

Give some time in spiritual reading.  
Gather together after dinner and read about a saint.

### **Intention**

Pray for the sick, suffering and dying.

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, please increase our faith.

### **Lenten Challenge**

Recognize your own needs and give them their due. Have faith and give others the gift of being able to help you from time to time.



## **Lent Quiz**

Fill in the blank - "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and \_\_\_\_\_ me". (Matthew 16:24)

## **Fifth Week of Lent - Thursday - John 8:51-59**

*"Let us radiate the peace of God and so light His light and extinguish in the world and in the hearts of all who have hatred and love for power".*

*St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

## **Reflection**

Do you radiate the peace of God to your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors? Mother Teresa suggests we all do just that, and by doing so we can help extinguish hatred and the love for power in the world. You may feel that your little part in radiating peace can't make much of a difference in the world. But consider this one small, seemingly frail woman, Mother Teresa, and what her one yes to God has done to change the world by opening our eyes to the poor and those in need and impressing upon us our responsibility to love with Jesus' love. Now imagine if we all did our part. No act of love or peace is ever little.

## **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, please open our eyes and hearts to your boundless love for us all.

## **Fasting**

Today, fast from judging others. Try not to judge people on their clothing or the color of their skin.



## **Almsgiving**

Give Jesus an extra ten minutes of time today. Ask him in prayer how you can help others.

## **Intention**

Pray for all who don't feel peace in their hearts and who don't experience it in their lives because they live in war-torn areas.

## **Closing Prayer**

Dear Lord, thank you for your great love. Help us to spread your love and peace to others.

## **Lenten Challenge**

Today try extra hard to be an instrument of God's peace.

## **Lent Quiz**

"Turn the other cheek" is a famous phrase of Jesus which means we shouldn't do what?

## **Fifth Week of Lent - Friday - John 10:31-32**

*"It is above all in raising children that family fulfills its mission to proclaim the gospel of life. By word and example, in the daily round of relations and choices, and through concrete actions and signs, parents lead their children to authentic freedom, actualized in the sincere gift of self and they cultivate in them respect for others, a sense of justice, cordial openness, dialogue, generous service, solidarity and all other values that help people to live life as a gift."*

*St. John Paul II, Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life), 92.4*

## **Reflection**

Word and example are powerful. Children are like little sponges. Our example speaks volumes to them. Our domestic church should be a place where the virtues are practiced heroically within the give and take and nitty-gritty details of family life. Take some time today to ponder how your words, example and actions are guiding your children/family/friends toward heaven. Discuss together about your words and actions. Try to understand the importance of thinking before speaking or acting and why you should do everything to please God.

## **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, please guide us to remember that all we do and say can either help or hurt others.

## **Fasting**

Today, fast from saying or doing anything negative or hurtful.

## **Almsgiving**

Give away 10 mins of time by doing a chore to help someone in the family or a needy neighbor.

## **Intention**

Let us pray for all who have lost their faith.

## **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us spread your love to everyone we meet.

## **Lenten Challenge**

See how many "love notes" you can leave for people today!  
(it could be a Post-it, email, text or card)



## **Lent Quiz**

How many times is the word "love" mentioned in the Bible?

## **Fifth Week of Lent - Saturday- John 11:45-46**

*"Jesus Christ did not save us with an idea or an intellectual program. He saved us with his flesh, with the concreteness of the flesh. He lowered himself, became man and was made flesh until the end."*

*Pope Francis: Homily, Domus Sanctae Marthae, June 14, 2013*

## **Reflection**

This is the perfect time for you and your family to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, unless you attended our Lenten Penance Service. Discuss the fact that, as Pope Francis points out above in his homily, Jesus humbled himself during his life even though he was God. He gave his life so that we may have Eternal Life. Encourage everyone to think about that today and then share your thoughts, perhaps over dinner or during some quiet time together.

## **Beginning Prayer**

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us so much that you gave your life for us.

## **Fasting**

Today fast from complaining. When tempted, instead say, "I love you, Jesus!".

## **Almsgiving**

Take time to thank Jesus for his great love for your family. Plan a way that together as a family/group to show God's love by helping someone in need.

## **Intention**

Let us pray for people around the world who are persecuted and tortured daily because of their faith.

## **Closing Prayer**

Dear Jesus, thank you for blessing us with our faith in you.

## **Lenten Challenge**





Try to be mindful of the needs of others instead of focusing on yourself.

### **Lent Quiz**

What is it called when people have on their body the same wounds of Christ?