

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



Fourth Sunday of Lent

Readings: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

The weight of our cross frees us from all of our burdens. In our obedience to the Father's will, we notice our rebellion and disobedience...Let the feelings of faith, hope, charity and sorrow for our sins be ingrained in our hearts, Lord and lead us to repent for our sins that have crucified you...Crucified Jesus, strengthen the faith in us so that it not give in before temptations, rekindle hope in us so that it not get lost by following the world's seductions. Protect charity in us so that it not be deceived by corruption and worldliness. Teach us that the cross is the way to resurrection.

Pope Francis - Reflections after the Way of the Cross, April 3, 2015

Reflection

Today is the Fourth Sunday of Lent. All three gospel readings for the three cycles of Lent offer perspectives on Jesus, the Light of the World: in Cycle A, we hear about the man born blind. This story speaks to us about faith. The faithful man receives physical and spiritual sight while those around him seem "blind" and lacking in faith. Pope Francis speaks about Christ's Cross in his words above. In meditating on the Cross of Christ, we might consider that something that appears to be so ugly, cruel and evil has in reality brought about miraculous love, mercy and forgiveness. Such is the mystery of the Cross of Christ in God's great love for us. During this season of Lent, ponder ways that you can offer up any of your difficulties, inconveniences or sufferings to Jesus and ask him to sanctify them and transform them into graces for your family members. Teach the children to not waste their sufferings. Ask them to "offer it up" to God when they don't feel well or are upset. God will grant them graces for lovingly doing so.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to be more patient when we are uncomfortable or suffering in some way.

Fasting

Fast from light. Sit by the light of one candle in your home.
Remember that Jesus has called you to be a light for the world.

Almsgiving

Offer a sacrifice to God today. It can be very simple but done with love. Offer it to God for a family member's benefit.

Intention

Pray for those who do not believe in God.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, I am sorry for all of my complaining. I love you and I love my life.

Faith Journey Questions

1. God chooses ordinary people, often the most unexpected. When have I been aware that God has chosen me for a special purpose, even though I may not fully understand God's will?
2. When have I judged someone and/or been judged based on outward appearances? How can I learn to see as God sees, into the heart?
3. Where in my life do I see the contrast between light and darkness?

Lenten Challenge

Pay attention to someone you may be tempted to brush off.

Lent Quiz

What is a person called who is persecuted, suffers and dies for his or her faith in God?

Prayer for Sundays of Lent

Heavenly Father, as I enter another 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.



Fourth Week of Lent - Monday - John 4:43-54

On that night of light began the third period of my life, the most beautiful and the most filled with graces from heaven. The work I had been unable to do in ten years was done by Jesus in one instant.

St. Therese of Lisieux - Story of a Soul

Reflection

At times, all of us, especially parents, may feel discouraged by today's darkened culture and the challenges it brings. No matter how depressing or dismal the world outside our domestic church's doors may seem, though, God continues to give us hope as well as the courage to continue striving to be a luminous torch to light the way for our children and loved ones. Throughout the day, ponder ways in which you can be a light of faith to your family.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to be strong and prayerful amid the forces of the world that contradict our Christianity.

Fasting

Today, fast from a treat.

Almsgiving

Surprise someone today with an unexpected gift of charity.
(If you have children, discuss some ideas of what you can do)

Intention

Pray for families who are grieving for one of their family members.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, enlarge our hearts to receive your great love.

Lenten Challenge

Today make a list of ten things you are grateful for in your life. Then share it with someone.

Lent Quiz

True or False - The more you give up for Lent, the holier you become.



Fourth Week of Lent - Tuesday - John 5:1-16

"Lord, help us to see in your Crucifixion and Resurrection an example of how to endure and seemingly die in the agony and conflict of daily life, so that we may live more fully and creatively".

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Reflection

Mother Teresa suggest we look to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection to help us in our daily conflicts and problems. Our challenges will never come close to our Lord's pain and suffering, but we can learn from Jesus how we are to endure hardship and challenges. Mother Teresa reminds us that in gaining strength through prayer and imitation of our Savior, we will be much more fulfilled. St. Paul reminds us, "If we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection".

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us look to you for guidance and strength in all that we do.

Fasting

Fast today from a favorite tv show, video game or an app on your phone.

Almsgiving

Think of someone who may be yearning for love.
What can you do to be more Christ-like for them?
What would Mother Teresa do?



Intention

Pray for all of the lonely people all around the world.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for your tender love for us.
Help us to be an instrument of your love to others.

Lenten Challenge

Do something for someone in secret.

Lent Quiz

What is a common spiritual devotion during Lent?

Fourth Week of Lent - Wednesday - John 5:17-30

"You accepted patiently and humbly the rebuffs of human life, as well as the tortures of your Crucifixion and Passion. Help us to accept the pains and conflicts that come to us each day as opportunities to grow as people and become more like you".

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Reflection

How many times in the course of just one day do we complain about little mishaps, annoyances and sufferings? When we begin to ponder the immense tortures our Lord endured during his passion and crucifixion for all of us, we may shrink down in embarrassment. Mother Teresa's words call us to a deeper level of living and loving. She asks our Lord to help us all accept the pains and conflicts that come to us as actual blessed opportunities for grace and growth.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for your love for us. Help us to open to your graces and love.

Fasting

Fast from worrying today. Instead trust God instead.

Almsgiving

Every time you start to worry, think about a blessing you have in your life.

Intention

Pray for the persecuted and tortured people all around the world.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to accept everything as an opportunity for grace, especially the difficulties.

Lenten Challenge

Look out for someone who is sad today and find a way to cheer them up.

Lent Quiz

The Good Friday service includes an opportunity for us to venerate what?



Fourth Week of Lent - Thursday - John 5:31-47

"On this last stretch of our penitential journey, may we be accompanied by Mary, the Virgin who remained ever faithful beside the Son, especially during the days of the Passion. May she teach us to love "to the end" following in the footsteps of Jesus, who saved the world through his Death and his Resurrection".

St. John Paul II, General Audience, April 11, 2001

Reflection

Just in the course of one day, we complain many times about our situations and circumstances or even little annoyances. Today, take some time with your family to ponder all of the sufferings our Lord endured during his passion and crucifixion. Take a few moments to gaze upon a crucifix. Meditating on Jesus' great love for us should cause us to reconsider all of our complaining. Together share what you are thankful to Jesus for.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying for us.

Fasting

Today, fast from complaining and negativity.

Almsgiving

Take time to thank Jesus for his great love for your family. Find a way to thank him concretely as a family by helping others, showing God's love.



Intention

Pray for the persecuted and tortured people all over the world.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, forgive us of our sins. Help us live holy lives.

Lenten Challenge

Pray the Rosary today as a family or alone.

Lent Quiz

Mary has the title of "Our Lady of _____" because she suffered so much watching her son crucified. (fill in the blank)

Fourth Week of Lent - Friday - John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

"Oh! How I love the memory of the blessed days of my childhood...to protect the flower of my innocence the Lord always surrounded me with love!"
- The Poetry of St. Therese of Lisieux

Reflection

St. Therese was convinced that because she was surrounded with love and the concern of her family, she remained virtuous. We can all learn from the holy Martin family and work at instilling holiness in the hearts of our own children. St. Therese's parents, Zelig and Louis, have been declared "blessed" by the Church and their daughter declared a saint and Doctor of the Church. The Martins sure did something right in raising their children!

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, please unite our hearts in prayer, now and always.

Fasting

Today, fast from worry.
Give all your worries and concerns to God in prayer.



Almsgiving

Give away a kind word or deed and put a lot of love into your actions.

Intention

Let us pray for those called to religious life to be open to God's graces.
Let us all pray for their families as well.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, enkindle in my heart the fire of your love and help me to spread it to others.

Lenten Challenge

Pray about what mission God has planned for you.

Lent Quiz

While on the cross, Jesus said "Behold your mother" to who?

Fourth Week of Lent - Saturday- John 7:40-53

"The Lord always forgives us and walks at our side. We have to let him do that".

Pope Francis: Twitter, August 30, 2013

Reflection

Whether you are alone, married couple, family or as a group, it is a day to really think about forgiveness and love. Pray the Our Father slowly. Be especially mindful of the line "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us". What does it mean to you? If you are in a family/group setting, share about how you feel. Remember that you are called to forgive others if you expect God to forgive you.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, grant us the grace to love our enemy and those who have hurt us.

Fasting

Today fast from arguing. When tempted to "be right", say a quiet prayer instead of trying to prove yourself.

Almsgiving

Let today's "alms" be a surprise to a family member. If you have children, encourage them to come up with some ideas.

Intention

Let us pray for the souls in purgatory.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to forgive others with a cheerful heart.

Lenten Challenge

Reach out today to someone you ordinarily would not reach out to. Reach out as Jesus would do.

Lent Quiz

Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of me" when and to who?

