

Second Sunday of Lent – March 12

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4; Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8-10; *Gospel:* Matthew 17:1-9

On this second Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of Matthew talks about the “transfiguration of Christ”. The voice of God from the heavens booms “this is my Beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” It recalls the voice of God from the heaven at Jesus’s baptism. Some of us may hope one day to hear those words from our family as loud as Jesus did on those occasions. We have to remember our Heavenly Father feels that way about us. He created us and loves us always. He does not break apart the heavens to say it, he says it in the smallness of our everyday lives: in the words of our friends and family, in the silences of our heart and challenges he knows we can overcome.

The next phrase from God is “listen to him.” God is telling those disciples to listen to Jesus. We need the same advice. We should keep our eyes, ears and hearts open for the words of our messiah. He offered his life as a ransom for our sins because of his love for us. Pay special attention to the way God communicates with you during this Lenten season. It probably will not be in booming voices, but the quietness of your everyday. No matter the volume, you are His beloved son or daughter.

- Jessica Carton (Religion Teacher)

Monday, March 13

First Reading: Daniel 9:4-10; Psalm 79:8, 9, 11, 13;

Gospel: Luke 6:36-38

Jesus said to his disciples, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” (Luke 6:36) How can we act more like Jesus and be a better disciple of Him during our lives, and especially during the season of Lent? Mercy means the compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm. Showing mercy towards one another is one great example of how we can grow closer to Jesus. If we treat others as we would like to be treated, then we will not only be rewarded now, but when we meet Jesus as well.

Jesus died on the cross to save us and we continue to pray to him asking forgiveness for when we have sinned. Jesus is kind and understanding and shows mercy when he forgives our sins. In order for our sins to be saved and forgiven we must truly be sorry and want to be better people. Lord, during this season of Lent, we ask You to help us be more like You and to show mercy and kindness towards those around us. Amen.

- Sean Donohue (Class of 2020)

Tuesday, March 14

First Reading: Isaiah 1:10, 16-20; Psalm 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23;

Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

In this Gospel passage, Jesus tells people not to follow the example of the Pharisees because of their hypocritical and selfish behavior. Criticizing them for performing good deeds

for the sake of impressing others, he says “All of their works are performed to be seen.” We must ask ourselves, who are we trying to impress? What bad examples are we following?

Sometimes, people can get caught up in trying to seem “cool” for others. We are not always impressing people for the right reasons. It is important to remember to stay true to yourself, and to do what is right because you know it is in your heart, not because it is what someone else has led you to believe. God does not care about how “popular” or “cool” you are. It is not necessary to worry about the judgement of others, and in turn we should not judge others in this way. The Gospel says, “You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers.” God is telling us that any status of a person is worthless. He is calling us to do what we know is right, and treat everyone with equal respect and kindness.

-Mercedes Escandon (Class of 2020)

Wednesday, March 15

First Reading: Jeremiah 18:18-20; Psalm 31:5-6, 14, 15-16;

Gospel: Matthew 20:17-28

As we move further into Lent, we are posed with a question: Why am I doing what I’m doing this Lent? Is it to appear holier and win the esteem and praise of my friends, or am I authentically trying to draw closer to Christ? If it’s the former, we’re missing the point. We shouldn’t be seeking such things, for they matter not to Christ. If it’s the latter, then we are doing what we should. James and John wanted earthly power and prestige, but these are fleeting. Christ did not enjoy the perks of power or royalty, we shouldn’t either.

Lord, help us to grow in humility and reverence. May our Lenten observances draw us closer to you. Amen.

- Anonymous

Thursday, March 16

First Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6;

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Have you ever felt yourself ignore God’s wisdom? Placing our trust in other people rather than the Lord makes us empty and unfulfilled. We are surrounded by waste and we do not grow. We begin to flourish the moment we place our trust and hope in God. Picking a side of good or evil is not necessary – what is important is the meditation of God’s words daily. As humans, we must strive to appreciate and understand His law. Through this appreciation, God will always follow and watch over us.

It is important to understand that our material possessions are not reflections of God’s love or blessing. In today’s Gospel, a very rich man who was indifferent towards the poor, specifically Lazarus, was sent to Hell. This proves that what you have does not make you a good person. During this Lenten season, aim to follow God’s word and to appreciate the non-physical things in our life.

- Ellie Farrell (Class of 2018)

Friday, March 17

First Reading: Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28;
Psalm 105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21; *Gospel:* Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

This reading starts off with the story of how the beloved son of Israel, Joseph, got sold into slavery by his brothers. Then the rest of the sons of Israel faked Joseph's death and lied to their father. God has a plan for all of us and sometimes we are tempted by sin to better ourselves. This story of Joseph's journey to Egypt is a prime example of how God saves us from sin, or in this case his own brothers. Unknown to the other sons of Israel, Joseph's plan takes shape and eventually rises the ranks to save his family and begin a time of prosperity in Egypt.

The Gospel refers to the story of the owner and the vineyard. The story details how the owner sends more servants to obtain the produce, but the tenants kill every servant, and even the master's son. God shows how those who follow him and listen to Jesus, will be prosperous, but those who go against God and turn toward sin, will suffer at the hand of their own sins.

Both of these stories show how God is present in our lives. God calls on all of us to spread his love to everyone. Whether it's your brother or your master, God calls on all of us to proclaim the good news. By doing this, we grow greater in our faith, and discover the plan he has for us.

- Kevin Fay (Class of 2017)

Saturday, March 18

First Reading: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20;
Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12; *Gospel:* Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you."
(Luke 15:21)

This story that Jesus is telling talks about a boy who freely spends everything his father gave him. The boy then returns to his father's home and is welcomed by him with open arms. The older son gets jealous about how the younger son can leave the family, then come back and have a party thrown for him. This father is showing that family is always there for each other, no matter what happens. This story also shows forgiveness. The father forgives his youngest son when he returns to the family. One other thing the story shows is jealousy. The older brother is jealous of the younger brother since he was forgiven right when he got home. These are only three meanings of this gospel reading.

- Jillian Visceglia (Class of 2020)

Third Sunday of Lent – March 19

First Reading: Exodus 17:3-7; *Psalm:* Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9;

Second Reading: Romans 5:1-2, 6-8; *Gospel:* John 4:5-42

We are like the Samaritan woman in the Gospel for we always thirst for water that gives life, for God. We thirst for everything that we need, like we long for peace of mind and heart, we long for good life and better future. We thirst for real joy, which is inner peace. We thirst for silence and rest and to be freed from pains and disturbances. But we are never fully satisfied as we are always longing for something. We always get thirsty for something that would last. And only in God to whom we can find that.

If we are filled by God, we can also be a source of life for others and share its freshness and fullness. Like the Samaritans in our gospel, they heard the preaching of Jesus, they listened and believed in Him. The Samaritans had recognized God in Jesus, the Son of God. Do we recognize and accept Jesus as the one who can give us water that would not make us thirsty again? We can be like the Samaritan woman who emptied her bucket so that God's word may fill it? Or we can be hard of heart and not let God's spirit nourish us.

Almighty and ever-living God, you are the water of life that fills and refreshes us always. May our faith be always life-giving like the water that the Samaritan woman discovered and drawn from Jesus, the savior of the world. May we also become life-giving and life-nurturing to the people of the world.

Intention: Let us pray for those people who are searching for the meaning of life and peace of mind, let us pray for all those who are working for the defense of life and peace-building especially in war stricken countries and communities. Let us pray for the hard of heart that they accept you into their lives and be changed forever.

-Aisling Hanna (Religion Teacher)