



SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2021

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 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 12:23-24

Excerpt from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
235 North Front St. New Bedford, MA 02746

MASSES FOR March 20th-28th

Saturday, March 20th—Fifth Sunday of Lent

4:00 PM +George Renaud
Req. Ann Bodzioch Robinson

Sunday, March 21st—Fifth Sunday of Lent

10:00 AM Etelvino Conterno
Req. Family

Monday, March 22nd—Lenten Weekday

7:30 AM OLPH Parishioners,
Living & Deceased

Tuesday, March 23rd—Lenten Weekday

7:30 AM ++Obenauf Family

Wednesday, March 24th—Lenten Weekday

7:30 AM +Adele Madej

Thursday, March 25th—Annunciation of our Lord

7:30 AM In Honor of St. Joseph
Req Armindo & Cynthia Linhares

Friday, March 26th—Lenten Weekday

5:00 PM *Stations of the Cross*
5:30 PM +Fr. Blase Wegierski, OFM Conv.

Saturday, March 27th—Lenten Weekday

7:30 AM +Helena Bobrowiecki
Req. Allen & Gail Ponichtera

Saturday, March 27th-Palm Sunday

4:00 PM +Michael Willett (anniv.)
Req. Ann Bodzioch Robinson

Sunday, March 28th—Palm Sunday

10:00 AM OLPH Parishioners,
Living & Deceased

Sisters and Brothers of Our Parish Family,

On Thursday we will celebrate the Solemnity of the *Annunciation*, that is, the Angel Gabriel's announcement to the Blessed Mother that she had been chosen by God to be the Mother of His Son, Jesus. It also marks her *Fiat*—her acceptance of God's will. At that moment, Jesus took on His human nature; this was His Incarnation.

Blessed Mother was a willing instrument of God. Without her agreeing to conceive and give birth to Christ, only God knows what the state of our salvation would be. Because Blessed Mother had been chosen from all women for this exalted honor, the angel Gabriel greeted her with the greatest respect: "*Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with you!*"

God lets *us* work with Him whenever we cooperate with His will. What a privilege!

Christ became one like us in all ways except sin, and Jesus will continue to have a human nature for all eternity. So, the Annunciation can truly be called the central point of all human history! While the Old Testament prophesied Christ's coming, the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old--and all because Blessed Mother said "yes!"

At the Annunciation, God gave Mary her vocation as the Mother of God. This event is captured in the beautiful meditative prayer, the *Angelus*, which we are invited to pray daily at twelve o'clock noon and six p.m. Whenever we need courage in saying "yes" to God, may this prayer help us to look to our Blessed Mother as our example and guide.

Peace and Blessings,
Father Conrad

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

Psalm 51

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.

Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me. R.

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.

Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me. R.

Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.

I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners shall return to you. R.

Hebrews 5:7-9

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Praise and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord;
and where I am, there also will my servant be. Jn 12:26



John 12:20-33

SOME GREEKS WHO HAD COME TO WORSHIP AT THE PASSOVER FEAST came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 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. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again." The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.



Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 21, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Lent (B)

Jer 31:31–34

Heb 5:7–9

Jn 12:20–33

Do I Have to Die?

Who has not asked this question, at least to oneself? It's a valid question, because at the core of every living being is the drive to live. Jesus also must have asked this question. Today's Gospel account implies this in John 12:27. ("I am troubled now.") Despite his passion for living, Jesus was more passionate about the transformation that would take place later. The example of the grain that must die if a harvest of wheat is to be produced is a perfect metaphor to make this point. Just as the grain is insignificant compared with the possible harvest, so—our faith assures us—there is no comparison between this life and the wondrous transformation that awaits us. And yes, in order to move from this life to that splendid future, we will have to die.

Our Lenten meditations will soon focus on the suffering and death of Jesus. However, to concentrate solely on suffering and death is like examining the

death of the grain without any thought of its transformation and the bountiful harvest that will come. We must not minimize Jesus' suffering. However, it was precisely by means of his having been lifted up on the cross in suffering and death that he was lifted up in glory and exaltation. This is why we claim that death is not the end of life but the gateway to new life. So, as difficult as it might be to leave the life we love, like Jesus we have to die in order to enter that new life.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

For Reflection

- ✦ *Begin to place yourself in God's hands with little things so that you are better able to do so in bigger things.*
- ✦ *The second reading reminds us that Christ is the source of our eternal salvation. Spend a moment in gratitude for this great gift.*

[Jesus asked,] "Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour."

JOHN 12:27



MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

Dear Padre,

I'm a non-Catholic church secretary who receives questions about a Purgatorial Society. What is it?

Those who die in God's grace and friendship imperfectly purified, although they are assured of their eternal salvation, undergo a purification after death, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of God" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1054). This process of purification is known as purgatory. Saint Gregory the Great (540–604) wrote "certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come" (see *Dialogues* 4, 39). This forgiveness of sins granted after death is also suggested in Matthew 12:32 and 2 Timothy 1:18.

Because Catholics believe we're in communion with one another through an active relationship that transcends death, our prayers and sacrifices benefit the deceased (see 2 Maccabees 12:38–46). Thus, a Purgatorial Society is a formal association of Catholics who offer prayers, Masses, and other works of charity to benefit the souls in purgatory. Souls that get to heaven, in turn, offer their prayers to benefit the living. This mutual assistance affirms our belief in an earthly and heavenly Church forming one body in Christ.

Purgatorial societies were especially prevalent from the Middle Ages through the previous century, but they're currently seeing a revival in some church parishes and religious communities. Societies generally maintain a

registry to enroll names of the deceased so that Masses are regularly offered for the holy souls in purgatory—especially during the month of November.

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR
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REYNATA SEDMAKOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

By visiting the tombs of our loved ones we remember that we have a multitude of saints who before God intercede for our needs. Let us not forget, however, that so many deceased also await our spiritual support. Let us remember them in our prayers...asking that they be welcomed into the ranks of the elect in heaven.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, OCTOBER 31, 2018



Calendar

Monday

MARCH 22

Lenten Weekday
Dn 13:1–9, 15–17,
19–30, 33–62
or 13:41c–62
Jn 8:1–11

Tuesday

MARCH 23

Lenten Weekday
Nm 21:4–9
Jn 8:21–30

Wednesday

MARCH 24

Lenten Weekday
Dn 3:14–20, 91–92, 95
Jn 8:31–42

Thursday

MARCH 25

*The Annunciation
of the Lord*
Is 7:10–14, 8:10
Heb 10:4–10
Lk 1:26–38

Friday

MARCH 26

Lenten Weekday
Jer 20:10–13
Jn 10:31–42

Saturday

MARCH 27

Lenten Weekday
Ez 37:21–28
Jn 11:45–56

Sunday

MARCH 28

*Palm Sunday of the
Passion of the Lord*
Mk 11:1–10 or
Jn 12:12–16
Is 50:4–7
Phil 2:6–11
Mk 14:1–15:47
or 15:1–39