

Readings for the week of February 15, 2026

Sunday:

Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/
1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a,
27-28, 33-34a, 37

Monday:

Jas 1:1-11/Ps 119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76/
Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday:

Jas 1:12-18/Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19/
Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday:

Jl 2:12-18/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and
17/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday:

Dt 30:15-20/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/
Lk 9:22-25

Friday:

Is 58:1-9a/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19/
Mt 9:14-15

Saturday:

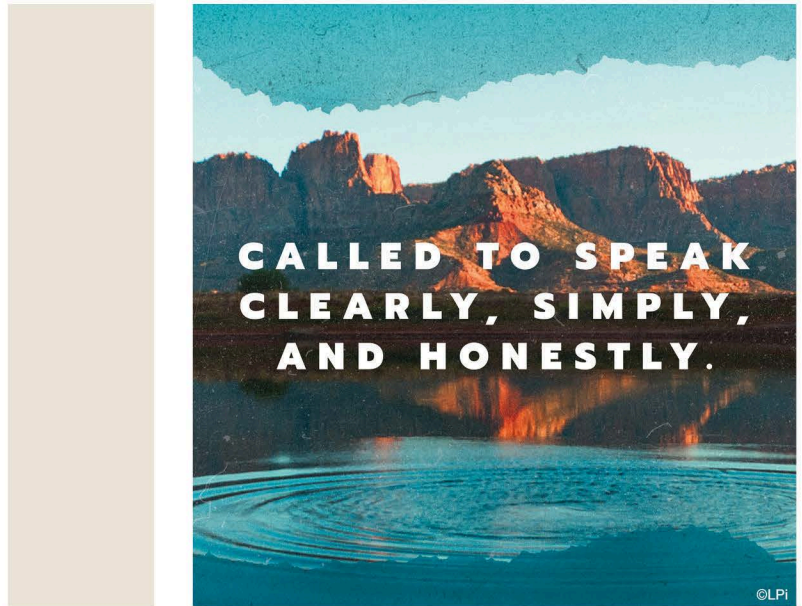
Is 58:9b-14/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 5:27-32

Next Sunday:

Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17/
Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19/Mt 4:1-11



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

A few years into my priesthood, I hit a wall. I had taken on too many commitments: Masses, meetings, ministries, projects. I couldn't keep up. I was double-booking, forgetting things, running late, and letting people down. My boss at the time, a wise priest, and our shared secretary, noticed. For my birthday, the two gave me a stack of 100 flashcards, each with one word printed in a different language: "NO." It was funny, but also painfully true. If I couldn't say no, my yes was in danger.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says, "**Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the Evil One**" (Matthew 5:37). He's not just giving advice about polite speech. He's showing us something about the freedom of Christian discipleship. The follower of Christ is called to speak clearly, simply, and honestly. There is joy in that kind of freedom.

The Church Fathers often linked this kind of straightforward truthfulness with spiritual maturity. The devil is the father of lies, but Jesus is the Word made flesh. When we hedge, flatter, exaggerate, or avoid, we open space for the shadows to creep in. That little stack of flashcards reminded me that God does not want us enslaved to the expectations of others or to the fear of disappointing them. He wants us to enjoy the peace of saying yes and meaning it, and saying no, and meaning it, too.

Lenten Challenge: Practice one moment of honest, peaceful speech this week. Maybe it's a sincere "yes" to something important, or a humble "no" to something you cannot do. Let it be a quiet step into the freedom Jesus offers.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: The law of Moses was like a good deck, admirably built. You could say “*Raqa*,” your heart filled with anger, and the law didn’t break. But that anger treads heavily. Over time, it becomes too much to bear. And that board — that law, that heart — it’ll break. Just you wait

The Carpenter and the Law

My husband and I couldn’t believe our luck: our new house had a deck. It was more than a couple of broke millennials had ever dared to dream. Lounging in our patio furniture drinking coffee and watching the cars drive past, we felt like Kennedys at Hyannis Port. We had arrived.

Well, until it started falling apart.

To be fair, my husband knew this was going to happen all along, because he’s a person who uses words like “joist” and “weight-bearing” correctly. He took one look at the deck at the open house and knew it wasn’t up to code. “We’re going to have to reinforce this at some point,” he told me. “Whatever!” I replied, daydreaming about twinkle lights and porch parties.

Sure enough, our second summer in the house, he had to rip the rotting surface boards off. The biggest issue was that the joists were too far apart; when we stepped on the boards, they bowed and almost cracked, lacking adequate support beneath. But we weren’t going to redo the whole deck — we’re not *actually* Kennedys. We (okay, *he*) simply ripped the surface boards off, added the necessary joists, and replaced the decking with newer, better, stronger wood.

Simply put, my husband did not come to abolish the deck, but to fulfill it.

The law of Moses was like a good deck, admirably built. You could say “*Raqa*,” your heart filled with anger, and the law didn’t break. But that anger treads heavily on boards not adequately supported. Over time, the anger becomes too much to bear. And that board — that law, that heart — it’ll break. Just you wait.

And when it does, you’ll see why: there wasn’t anything beneath, holding it up.

So God sent a Carpenter to reinforce the law. The Carpenter crafted joists from prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance — strong virtues that can withstand a lifetime of battery, if properly maintained.

And the law still holds.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Why is the Church against stem cell research, especially if it offers the possibility of cures for diseases like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s?

Answer:

Like so many issues, the truth about stem cell research is more complicated than a few sound bites and vague promises of cures. For the Church, the problem is with *embryonic* stem cell research, not the research itself. The destruction of human life, even for a seemingly noble cause, is never acceptable. The ends cannot justify the means. Stem cells can be obtained in other ways, including from the placenta as well as from adults. So research is possible without the destruction of other life.

On the other hand, stem cell research shows much promise, but no concrete results. Some scientists also dispute what diseases might be cured by new discoveries. The research is still in its early stages. The question for our country is whether we should invest a lot of money in research now, looking for cures that will probably remain out of reach for most people, or should we invest that money in other programs with more immediate benefits, especially those that stress prevention and education. It is indeed a complex issue that requires close scrutiny and investigation before we jump to inaccurate conclusions or make decisions based on good, but misinformed, intentions.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

No one does he command to act unjustly,
to none does he give license to sin. (Sir 15:20)

Psalm:

Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord! (Ps 119)

Second Reading:

Rather, we speak of God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden,
which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.
(1 Cor 2:7)

Gospel:

"I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses
that of the scribes and Pharisees,
you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:20)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus does not want us to live within the law — he wants the law to live within us. God's law, fulfilled by His Son, is rich soil. We must let it nourish the words and the decisions of our Christian life — only then will it flow forth into the world.

Observances for the week of February 15, 2026

Sunday: 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

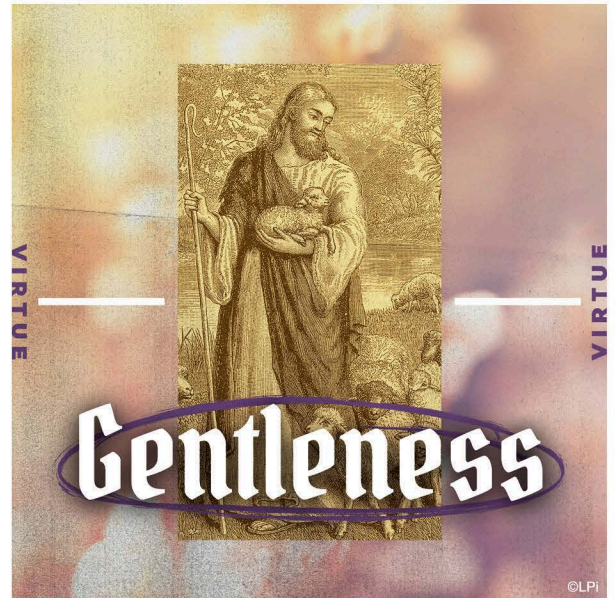
Monday: Presidents' Day

Tuesday: The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

Wednesday: Ash Wednesday

Saturday: St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Next Sunday: 1st Sunday of Lent



Virtues, Explained!

Gentleness disposes us to receive the inspirations of the Spirit, who "reveals to men who Jesus is" (CCC 152). In cultivating a spirit of gentleness, we more closely resemble Christ, who was unfailingly gentle, even in the face of violence and death

Blessing of Love

Heavenly Father,
Ignite us with Your love.
Reveal to us Your will,
guide us in Your path.
Pour Your blessings upon us,
You who are the giver of every
good thing.
Help us to live, work, act, and
speak
in ways that bring honor and
glory to You.
Amen.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.”

- Mt 5:21-22a

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Sirach speaks of the human freedom to choose between good and evil and of God’s desire for us to act justly. What good could you do this week for a friend or family member?

Second Reading:

Paul teaches that God reveals His wisdom to us through the Holy Spirit. How might you be more open to listening to the Holy Spirit in your daily life?

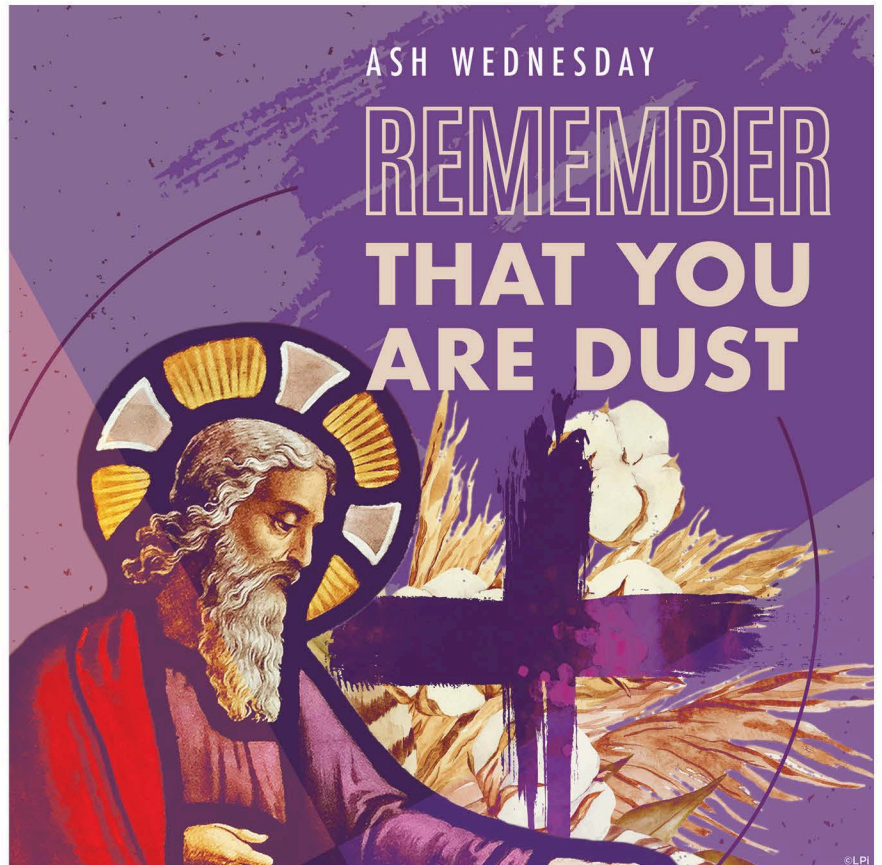
Gospel:


Jesus offers stern warnings against breaking the commandments, holding grudges, committing adultery, divorcing your spouse, and falsifying oaths. Why do you think Jesus holds us to such high moral expectations?



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BLESSED
ARE THOSE
WHO FOLLOW
THE LAW OF
THE LORD!

Psalm 119

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“Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all. Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’ mean ‘No.’ ”
- Mt 5:33-34a, 37

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