

Readings for the week of March 17, 2024

Sunday:

Jer 31:31-34/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15 (12a)/
Heb 5:7-9/Jn 12:20-33 *Scrutiny:* Ez
37:12-14/Ps 130: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (7)/
Rom 8:8-11/Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27,
33b-45

Monday:

Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62/
Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6/Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday:

2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27
and 29/Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22/Mt 1:16, 18-21,
24a or Lk 2:41-51a

Wednesday:

Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55,
56/Jn 8:31-42

Thursday:

Gn 17:3-9/Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9/Jn 8:51-59

Friday:

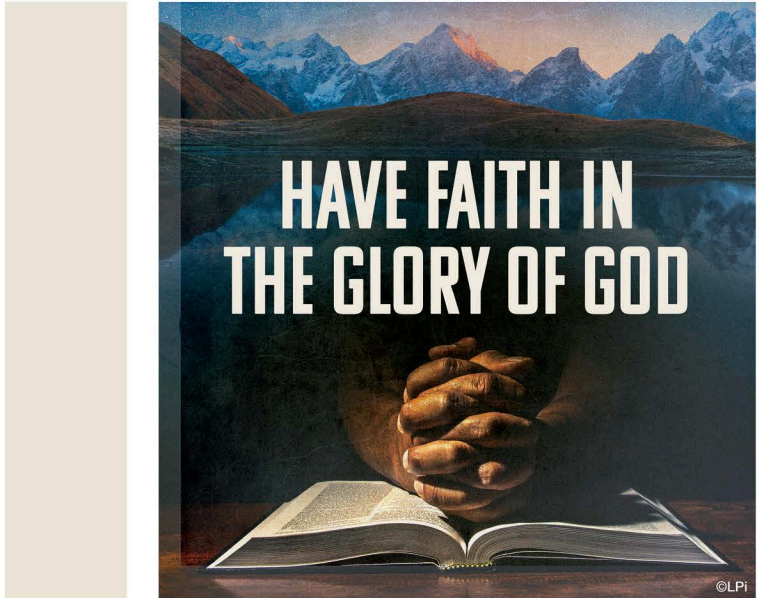
Jer 20:10-13/Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7/
Jn 10:31-42

Saturday:

Ez 37:21-28/Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13/
Jn 11:45-56

Next Sunday:

Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16/Is 50:4-7/Ps
22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 (2a)/
Phil 2:6-11/Mk 14:1–15:47 or 15:1-39



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

A middle-aged woman sat on the couch in my parish office and recounted to me a shocking list of terrible calamities in her life: addictions, terminal illnesses, financial loss, broken relationships, and so on. She smiled as she did so. “Please forgive me,” I asked, “but you seem to be smiling as you share this.” She said, “Father John, I am totally overwhelmed. But I’m smiling because I just can’t wait to see what good things God does with this mess.” She expected God would manifest His glory when she most needed it.

This week in the Gospel, God speaks from heaven for the third and final time in Jesus’ earthly ministry. It’s at a tough moment. Gentiles seek Jesus, who announces his terrible suffering, and then boldly prays, **“Father, glorify your name!”** John then writes: **Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.”** Was the task of drawing the whole non-Jewish world to himself overwhelming? Or was it the terrible specter of crucifixion? Whatever it was, the crushing weight triggers his turning to the Father with an unshakeable expectation of divine glory to burst through. And indeed, it did on Easter Sunday. In our burdens, our greatest strength is to turn to God and boldly ask Him for His glory.

Lenten challenge: This week, I invite you to list out everything which is a burden to you. Write it down. Then add these words: “Father, glorify Your name in all these things!” Put that paper in your pocket or purse when you come to Holy Week liturgies next week. You might smile at the most unlikely times.

— *Father John Muir*



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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Lost in the Crowd

I write my phone number on my kids' arms when we go into large crowds at summer festivals, in case we get separated. If you think this makes me sound like a neurotic person with an overactive imagination who watches too many true crime documentaries, you would be correct. I am all of those things.

However, I am also practical, and I've endured moments of panic after looking up and briefly not being able to locate a child who has wandered off or lagged behind. The phone number, scrawled across their sunscreen-streaked skin, is a safeguard, however insignificant. It's something they can hold up to show an adult, something they can point to and say, "This is where I need to be. Help me get here."

When I reflect on my own life, it occurs to me that I was born lost. We all were. It was only in Eden that a human being ever knew what it was to be at home. In Eden, I would imagine, the feeling of safety was so natural that it was only noticed after it was gone. But original sin came like a noisy crowd to bear us away from the place we needed to be, and since that time, our human lives have played out against a backdrop of insecurity and unfamiliarity. We are cold and alone and confused. And God, our heartbroken parent, never stops seeking us, never stops calling our names.

Baptism, the etching of God's law onto our heart and soul, is not a phone number written on our arms. It's something far better — it's a homing signal, planted deep within. And it will lead us back to where we need to be.

"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." — Jeremiah 31:33

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Why do parishes have the Blessed Sacrament in a separate room?

Answer:

While many Catholics of a certain age have memories of the Blessed Sacrament being housed in the tabernacle on the high altar of the church, many parishes in the decades since the Second Vatican Council have chosen to build a separate space — a reservation chapel — where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. Although this practice is not universal, it is in keeping with the guidance offered by the US Bishops in their document *Built of Living Stones* (see nos 77-78). The goal is to create a space that is separated from the nave and sanctuary, but which is "integrally connected with the church" which can foster "reverence and can provide the quiet and focus needed for personal prayer." This can be especially important for communities that have continuous eucharistic adoration, allowing people to come and pray in a space separate from the normal activities of parish life.

The practice of reserving the Eucharist in a separate space — or in a dignified location away from the altar where Mass is celebrated — is that it emphasizes the importance of the liturgy itself, which is the "source and summit" of the life of the Church.

As with many things in the Church, the practice of placing the tabernacle in the sanctuary or in a separate chapel is not universal (as can be seen in visits to historic churches in Rome and other places). The important thing is that as communities question where to place the tabernacle, they listen to the voice of the Church, explore the ancient and varied liturgical tradition of the Church, consider the needs and life of the community, and also take into account the architecture and limits of the spaces they might already have.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD,
for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin
no more. (Jer 31:34)

Psalm:

Create a clean heart in me, O God. (Ps 51)

Second Reading:

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. (Heb 5:8-9)

Gospel:

"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)

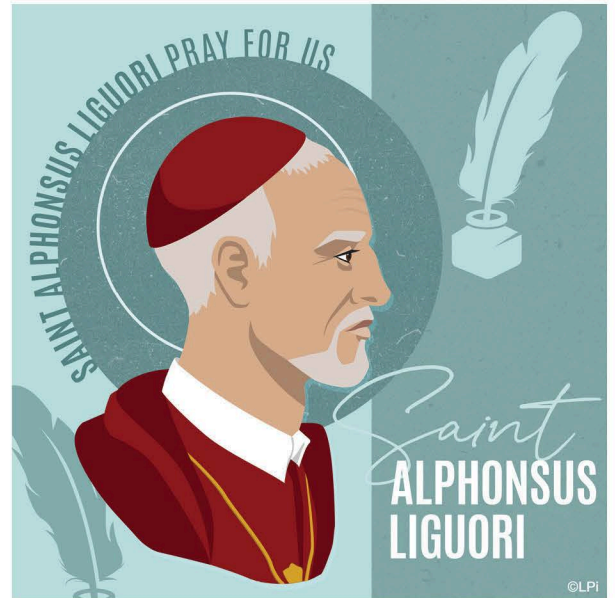
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus reminds us that the grain of wheat can never realize its potential without sacrifice. God has a plan for each one of us. May He give you strength to become who you were born to be.

Observances for the week of March 17, 2024

- Sunday:** 5th Sunday of Lent
- Monday:** St. Cyril of Jerusalem,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church
- Tuesday:** St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Saturday:** St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop
- Next Sunday:** Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord,
Holy Week begins



Saint of the week

St. Alphonsus Liguori, (1696-1787) was a prolific theologian and founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (The Redemptorists). Renowned for his profound devotion to the Eucharist and insightful theological teachings, he is the patron saint of moral theologians.

Prayer of Bold Ask

God in heaven,
Hear me as I call to you! Pour
new life into me! Renew my
heart in Your word! Help me to
know You! Help me to glorify
You, worship You, and trust
You. Amen.

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

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading

Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised Israel “a new covenant”: the Lord’s law will be written in our hearts and known by all who believe. Do you know people who seem to have a heart-felt faith?

Second Reading

Hebrews teaches us that Jesus struggled with his own impending suffering and death. During this Lenten season, what has been a struggle for you?

Gospel Question

Jesus taught that through his own suffering and death, he would drive out the “ruler of this world” (Satan) and draw everyone to himself. In what ways are you drawn to Christ?



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“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. 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.” - Jn 12:24, 31-32

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