Readings for the week of March 2, 2025

Sunday:
Sir 27:4-7/Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16 (see 2a)/
1 Cor 15:54-58/Lk 6:39-45

Monday:
Sir 17:20-24/Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7/Mk 10:17-27

Tuesday:
Sir 35:1-12/Ps 50:5-6, 7-8, 14 and 23/
Mk 10:28-31

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:
Dt 26:4-10/Ps 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
(see 5b)/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13

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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

One of the things that older pastors and younger priests occasionally quarrel about is the proper balance between work and prayer. I know one pastor who complains that his younger associate ignores the people and the parish because he wants to spend more time in prayer. And the young priest complains that the pastor gives him too much work to do and no time to pray. The Lord's words this Sunday speak into this tension with an image that can help us find a proper balance between life and prayer.

Jesus says, **"For every tree is known by its fruit. For people do not pick figs from thorn bushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles"** (Luke 6:44). When we are deeply rooted and cultivating our relationship with Jesus, we are going to bear the fruit of that love in our lives. No fruit, no good prayer. How do we know that we are praying well? We are experiencing concrete fruits of love for others in our lives.

Someone who prays well will, sooner or later, burst forth the "figs" and "grapes" of acts of love. But without concrete commitment to deeds of selfless service to others, our prayer time is as useless as thorn bushes and brambles. Let's recommit ourselves to be men and women of prayer and service. And hopefully the pastors will help their associates to pray *and* serve fruitfully...with minimal quarreling.

— Father John Muir

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: If we see a splinter in another person's eye, or a problem in the world that needs to be fixed, what Jesus is saying is not that we should ignore it and move on. He's merely saying that, when we see these things, we must take them first as a challenge to examine ourselves.

The Log in Your Eye
Today's Gospel is a big favorite of non-Christians — or Christians who don't like being told what to do.

That trusty ol' *remove the wooden beam from your own eye* line is a classic. *Mind your business, Christians! You're not perfect either.*

And that's entirely true. None of us are perfect. We've all got logs in our eyes. We can't approach life acting like we have the answers simply because we follow Jesus.

Jesus has the answers, and we have Jesus.

The real problem with having someone remove a splinter from my eye, if he himself has a log in his eye, is not that he has no business removing the splinter from my eye. It's that he can't see clearly to do it. His own eyesight is occluded.

If we see a splinter in another person's eye, or a problem in the world that needs to be fixed, or a scandal in the community that should be addressed, what Jesus is saying is not that we should ignore it and move on. He's merely saying that, when we see these things, we must take them first as a challenge to examine ourselves. To address the problem as it exists within our own souls, so that we ensure we are seeing clearly. Then, if we reach out to pluck the splinter, we will do so with clear eyesight.

He wants us to worry as much about our own souls as we do about other people's.

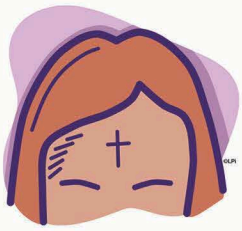
We tend to look at the world and feel anxious — so much evil! So much hate! So much sin! We pray, *God, when will you change it?*

And He whispers back: *I will change it here. Now. In your own heart. You just have to ask.*

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained



Question:

Why do we place ashes on our forehead each Ash Wednesday?

Answer:

Ashes are rich in spiritual symbolism. We recall in the second chapter of Genesis, when the human person is fashioned "*out of the dust of the ground*" and receives the breath of life (Genesis 2:7). In death, a person returns to the ground from which we came. The ancient Hebrews used ashes as a sign of repentance, reminding themselves that God is God and we are not.

As the minister places ashes on our forehead, we hear either "*remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return*" or "*turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.*" When we receive ashes, we remember our own mortality. We're reminded that we have limited time on this earth and we ought to make the best use of it that we can! People are in need of love, care, and compassion. We all need to continually rediscover the love of God. The Gospel invites every person in every stage of life to encounter and imitate Jesus here and now. The forty days of Lent are the perfect time to assess our own awareness of these realities.

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Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:
Praise no one before he speaks,
for it is then that people are tested. (Sir 27:7)

Psalm:
Lord, it is good to give thanks to you. (Ps 92)

Second Reading:
But thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 15:57)

Gospel:
"A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks." (Lk 6:45)

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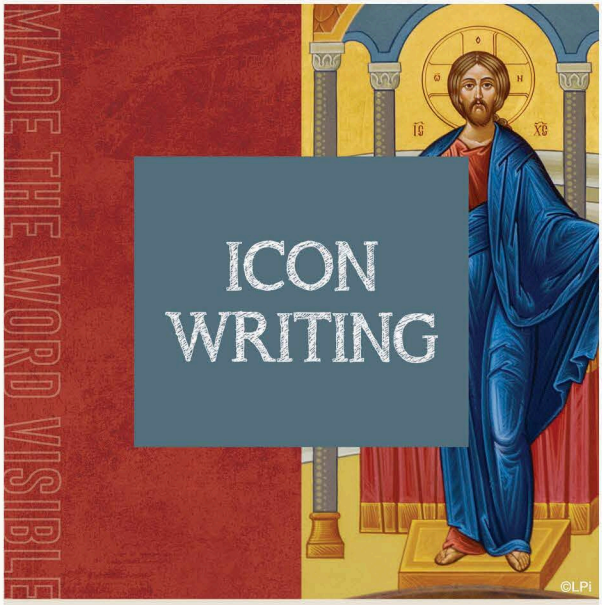
Live The Liturgy
Inspiration of the Week

Remove the beam from your own eye, Jesus reminds us, before removing the splinter from your brother's. This doesn't mean we should not help each other to be holy. But holiness must come from within. If we don't have it, we can't share it. Are we looking hard enough at our own souls?

Observances for the week of March 2, 2025

Sunday:	8th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday:	St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin
Tuesday:	St. Casimir
Wednesday:	Ash Wednesday
Friday:	Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs
Saturday:	St. John of God, Religious
Next Sunday:	1st Sunday of Lent; Daylight Saving Time begins



Devotions, *Explained!*

Though an icon depicts an image, it's much more than a religious picture. An icon is visual theology. It expresses the same truths written in the Gospel, but through an artistic medium, mirroring how Christ's incarnation made the Word visible to man in the flesh.

Prayer for Interior Life

Dear Jesus,
Fill my heart so full of goodness that it produces your goodness.
Let my thoughts, words, and actions reflect you.

Amen.

"How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,' when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye."

- Lk 6:42

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Sirach teaches us to pay attention to how people speak; it reveals a lot. How often do you find yourself weighing your words before speaking?

Second Reading:

Paul speaks of Jesus's resurrection as taking away the "sting" and "victory" of death. What words of comfort do you use to those grieving over the death of a loved one?

Gospel:

Jesus encourages his followers to be humble in judgment of others and mindful in speech. Have you had good role models in your life for these virtues?

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Liturgical Life

"A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks." - Lk 6:43, 45

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