

Readings for the week of March 3, 2024

Sunday:

Ex 20:1-17 or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11 (Jn 6:68c)/1 Cor 1:22-25/Jn 2:13-25
Scrutiny: Ex 17:3-7/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9 (8)/
Rom 5:1-2, 5-8/Jn 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Monday:

2 Kgs 5:1-15ab/Ps 42:2, 3; 43:3,4/
Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday:

Dn 3:25, 34-43/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc,
8-9/Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday:

Dt 4:1, 5-9/Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20/
Mt 5:17-19

Thursday:

Jer 7:23-28/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9/Lk 11:14-23

Friday:

Hos 14:2-10/Ps 81:6c-8a, 8bc-9, 10-11ab,
14 and 17/Mk 12:28-34

Saturday:

Hos 6:1-6/Ps 51:3-4, 18-19, 20-21ab/
Lk 18:9-14

Next Sunday:

2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23/Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6
(6ab)/Eph 2:4-10/Jn 3:14-21 *Scrutiny:*
1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4,
5, 6 (1)/Eph 5:8-14/Jn 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9,
13-17, 34-38



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

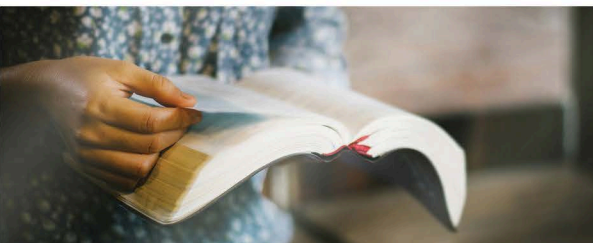
I am the Lord your God ... You shall not have other gods beside me.
—Ex 20:2-3

One of the greatest golfers of all time — if not the greatest — was Jack Nicklaus. Which is why it is baffling that at the beginning of each season he would return to his childhood coach and re-learn how to grip the golf club. It's like Shakespeare re-learning the alphabet and grammar. Why would he do that? Because Jack knew that the fundamentals are always relevant. Perfecting and obsessing over his grip allowed him to do everything else in the game well. In sports and life, the best ones love the basics.

Similarly, as we begin Lent, we re-learn the spiritual basics in the Ten Commandments. Consider the first, to “**have no other gods besides me.**” This is our “grip.” Is our connection to God one of absolute fidelity and exclusive worship? Am I willing to let go of my precious idols, the things I cling to instead of God? Once we say “yes” to this fundamental question of our spiritual “grip,” then we are ready to properly engage with everything else in life. Watch how beautifully the game of life unfolds in the next nine commandments (numbered in parentheses): how we speak to God and others (2 and 8), how we organize our week (3), how we relate to our family (4) and the wider community (5 and 7), how we live our sexuality (6), and how we order all the other desires of the human heart (9 and 10). But don't rush to these later Commandments too soon! Everything in life is built on the first Commandment. The more we focus on worshipping God alone, the better we navigate the complexity of life with panache, effectiveness, and love.

Lenten challenge: This week, identify what you can do to better worship God alone. If you're not sure, scan the last nine commandments to identify what you are most likely to worship instead of God. Power, pleasure, control of your time, possessions, family, health, reputation, money? Commit to concrete action to help you let go of this “idol” to better hold on to God alone in faithful worship. Remember: the best love the basics.

— *Father John Muir*



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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

The Merciful Anger of Jesus

Watch your fellow churchgoers today as the priest or deacon reads the story of Jesus raising hell (or perhaps he's raising heaven?) in the temple square. Dollars to donuts, they'll be squirming.

As Catholics, we have become very uncomfortable with Angry Jesus. He makes us cringe in the same way that the Old Testament God does when He calls Himself "jealous" and talks about punishment. That level of intensity makes us recoil. If it were present in a human relationship, it would be toxic and abusive, because in humanity, fierceness and love rarely coexist in a healthy way.

But what a tragedy it would be for us to mistake our relationship with God for our relationship with our spouse, our best friend, or even our human father. Because we cannot see clearly, we would mistake His zeal for anger and His law for diktat.

The strong and sure movement of a wave against a rocky cliff will, over time, erode its surface, just as an overabundance of raindrops will flood a city. We do not call the water callous and cruel. We still luxuriate in its coolness and refreshment. Its destructive powers don't negate the life-giving properties of water. We do not demand that water apologize to us for being strong.

Fierce, uncompromising — but also, soft and merciful. How can God — and God's law — be both, at the same time? How can Christ cast a whip at someone's foot, overturn a table and scatter coins? How can the law of God be perfect, as the Psalm says, and refresh the soul — while demanding so much of it?

All I can say is, thank God for Angry Jesus. We need his fierceness and thank God it does not wane because it confuses us. Thank God his mercy does not decrease because we doubt it.

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." — 1 Corinthians 1:25

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Is it ever Ok to leave Mass before it ends?

Answer:

This is an interesting question because beneath the surface there seems to be an assumption that if it's okay, then why do we have to stay after we receive communion? The short answer is "no," but we definitely want to go a bit deeper as we consider why.

First, when we think about questions like this, we must consider this in adult terms. If there is something gravely important that we need to do, then we must attend to that. However, if it is a matter of convenience or preference, then we really have to stop and think again. First, while we always want to recognize the importance of sacramental communion in the Mass, we also need to understand how important the time of thanksgiving and prayer after communion is. This is summarized in the Prayer After Communion offered by the celebrant and then we are also commissioned to "Go forth" during the Dismissal of the Mass, reminding us that we have been entrusted with a gift — the Word of God and the Presence of Christ in the sacrament — and that we are to share that gift with others.

If we simply leave after we receive communion, we risk two things. First, there is the possibility that we will turn our reception of communion into a purely personal, individual experience that is separated from our common experience of worship — and communion in the fullest sense — and, second, we lose an opportunity for gratitude and serious reflection if we simply leave after communion. This time of thanksgiving, reflection, and, ultimately, missioning, are important and, in the end, an essential part of the celebration of the Mass.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

In those days, God delivered all these commandments:
"I, the LORD am your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place
of slavery.
You shall not have other gods besides me." (Ex 20:1-3)

Psalm:

Lord, you have the words of everlasting life. (Ps 19)

Second Reading:

We proclaim Christ crucified,
a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike,
Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
(1 Cor 1:23-24)

Gospel:

Jesus answered and said to them,
"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."
(Jn 2:19)

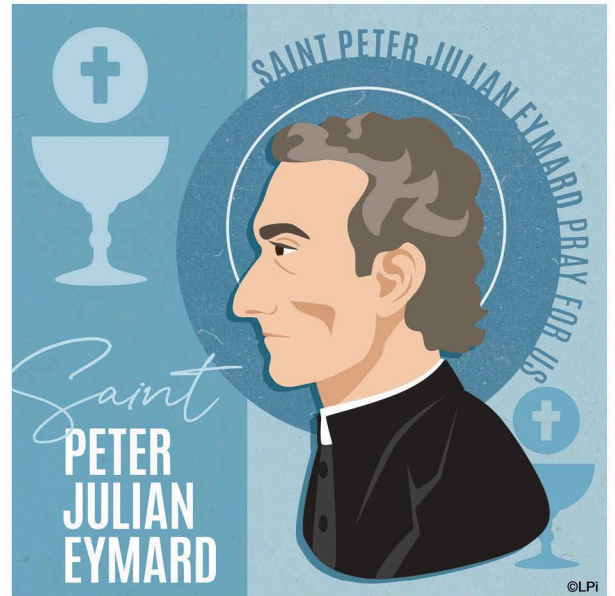
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus was not afraid to confront iniquity wherever he encountered it, and his zeal for righteousness was so strong it looked like anger as he drove the moneychangers from the temple. Pray that, with that same devotion and care, he will cleanse our hearts from sin.

Observances for the week of March 3, 2024

- Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Lent
Monday: St. Casimir
Thursday: Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs
Friday: St. John of God, Religious
Saturday: St. Frances of Rome, Religious;
St. Catherine of Bologna
Next Sunday: 4th Sunday of Lent, Daylight Saving Time begins



Saint of the week

St. Peter Julian Eymard, known as "Apostle of the Eucharist," founded the Society of the Blessed Sacrament and the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. He promoted perpetual adoration, inspired those estranged from the Church to return, and worked to educate all about Christ.

Prayer of Surrender

Dear Lord,
Help me to place You in the center of my plans for the future, my dreams for my life, my goals for the time ahead. Be my God and my guide. Amen.

And to those who sold doves he said, “Take these out of here, and stop making my Father’s house a marketplace.” His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me.

- Jn 2:16-17

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading

The “10 Commandments” given to Moses at Mount Sinai reveal God’s moral and ethical expectations for Israel. Which of these Commandments do you personally find most challenging to follow?

Second Reading

Early in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul speaks of his firm conviction in the power and wisdom of his proclamation, “Christ crucified.” What are you confident about in your faith life?

Gospel Reading

Jesus’ deep passion (“zeal”) for the Jerusalem Temple led to his strong (and violent) reaction to what he witnessed in the Temple. What is something you feel passionate about as it relates to your faith?



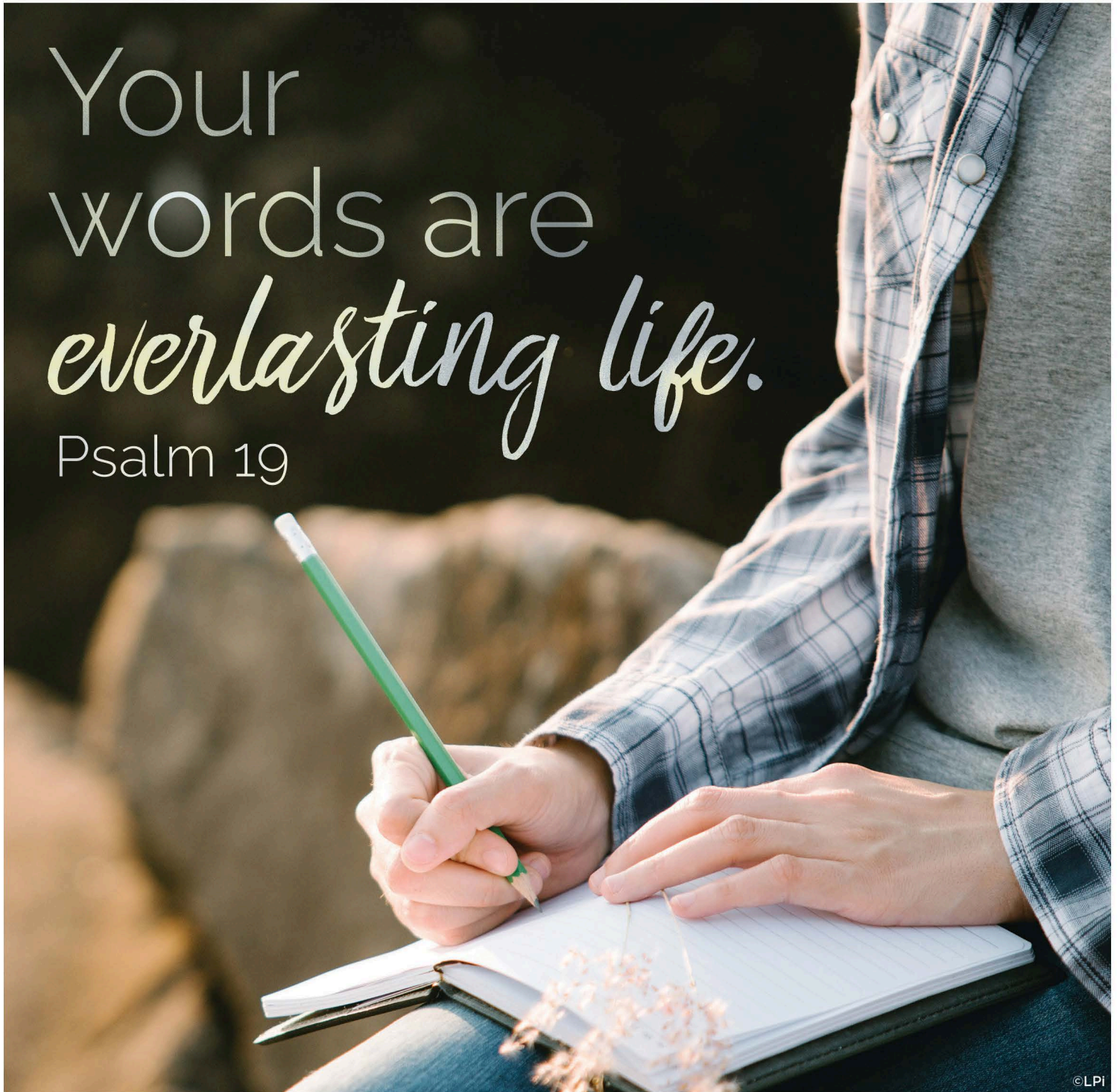
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Your
words are
everlasting life.

Psalm 19



Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area.
- Jn 2:13b-15a

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