

PROCLAIMING CHRIST

Meditations for the Season of Lent



“Proclaiming Christ means showing that to believe in and to follow him is not only something right and true, but also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendor and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties.”

— EVANGELII GAUDIUM
 (“THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL”), 167

Faith Stories

John 4:5–42

Today’s Gospel shows us a different kind of encounter with Jesus. Unlike last week’s story of Nicodemus, who sought out Jesus, or the disciples who accompanied Jesus to the mountaintop, the woman in today’s reading meets Jesus by accident when she goes to the well to get water.

At first she is shocked that Jesus would even speak to her. But, as their conversation progresses, the woman wants the living water that Jesus tells her about. When Jesus reveals everything about her past, she recognizes that he is no ordinary human being. When he tells her that he is the Messiah, she runs back to the town and encourages other people to meet Jesus.

This woman’s encounter with

FOR REFLECTION

- › Who are the people that invited you to encounter Christ during your life?
- › In what ways were you changed through your encounters with Christ?
- › How can you invite others to encounter Christ?

Jesus not only changed her life, but it changed the lives of others. She accomplished this simply by sharing her story. We are also called to share our faith stories. How many lives would be changed if we had the courage to tell our stories and invite others to encounter Christ?

LENT TRIVIA ?

1. How many Stations of the Cross are there?
2. Name the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.
3. During what days of the week do we meditate on the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary?

Answers on reverse.



Almsgiving

Giving alms has always been an important part of Lent. For many people, it means giving money to the parish or some other good cause. But the concept of almsgiving goes much deeper. It is our response to the teachings of Jesus that encourage us to reach out to people in need — not just with our money but also with our time and talents. Almsgiving allows us to cultivate a spirit of generosity. It gives us a chance to share with other people what we have and who we are. It helps us understand that we are all members of the Body of Christ. Think carefully about how you will share your time, talents, and treasure during Lent this year.

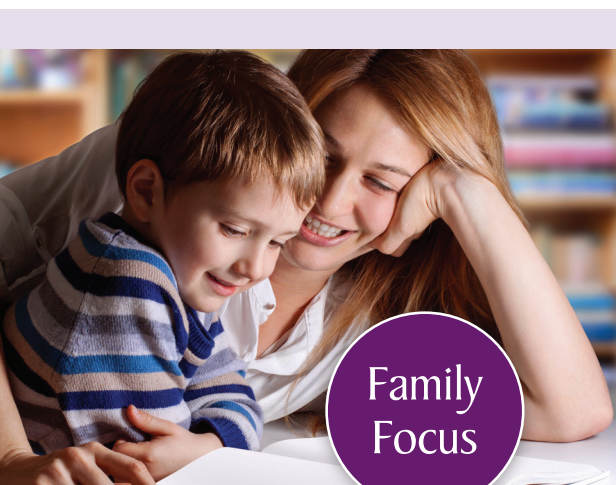


Lenten Prayer



The Prayer of St. Francis is a powerful way to ask God for the graces we need to share his love with others:

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.”



Family Focus

Tell your children stories about their baptism, the faith of their grandparents, and your faith experiences as you were growing up. Visit the church where you made your first Communion or confirmation. Show them photos from your faith milestones. By sharing your faith stories, your children will learn how to tell their own faith stories.

Extending an Invitation

We all know people who have drifted away from their faith for one reason or another. Lent is the perfect time to invite them to come to Mass with you. Or you could invite them to a Lenten lecture, Stations of the Cross, or some other Lenten event at your parish. It doesn't have to be something religious. Maybe your parish is having a fish fry or a spaghetti dinner. Inviting someone to meet other parishioners is often the best way to help them reconnect. There are people out there just waiting for an invitation to come back to the Church. You could be the one to help transform their lives!



Catechism CONNECTION

“The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as *witnesses of the Gospel*. ... This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds.”

— *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2472

Answers: 1. There are 14 Stations of the Cross. 2. The sorrowful mysteries are the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging at the Pillar, the Crowning with Thorns, Jesus Carrying His Cross, and the Crucifixion. 3. The sorrowful mysteries are prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays.