



THEY
WILL
BE
DONE

LENTEN REFLECTION

2024

Art by Josh Elboom, Sam Fox '26
The Catholic Student Center, Washington University in St. Louis

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Calendar and Notes

Lenten Liturgical Schedule:

Ash Wednesday 2/14

Medical Campus Services:

Ashes Service: 12:05pm, Medical Campus, EPNEC, 1st Floor. Ashes available as well after the service until 2pm.

Main Campus services:

Mass: 12:05pm, CSC Chapel

Mass: 5:30pm, CSC Chapel, with soup dinner following

Ashes available at the CSC from 8am-7pm (except during Mass times)

Palm Sunday 3/24

Mass: 11am & 4:30pm (Candlelight Mass), CSC Chapel

Holy Thursday 3/28

Mass: 7pm, CSC Chapel

Adoration afterwards until midnight

Good Friday 3/29

Service: 7pm, CSC Chapel

Easter Vigil 3/30

Mass: 7:30pm, CSC Chapel, RCIA party to follow

Easter 3/31

Mass: 10am, Graham Chapel (no evening Mass anywhere in Archdiocese)

Weekly Ongoing Events:

("Core" Communities are CSC Bible Study/faith sharing groups)

Sundays:

Mass: 11am and 4:30pm & Sunday Supper for Students, CSC Chapel (no 4:30pm on 3/10 or Easter Sunday)

Mondays:

Evening Prayer led by students: 5:30pm @ CSC chapel
BD Dinner with Kate: 6-7:30pm
Undergrad Core: 7-8pm @ CSC

Tuesdays

DUC Lunch with CSC campus ministers: 11am-1pm
Confession: 4:45-5:30pm @ CSC
Mass and soup: 5:30pm (except 3/12), CSC living room
RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults: 7-8:30pm CSC Social Hall (except 3/12)
Undergrad Core: 7-8pm @ CSC
GSYA (Grad Student/Young Adult) Core: 8-9pm @ CSC

Wednesdays

Medical Campus Soulful Conversations w/Fr. Gary:
11:30am-1:30pm, Danforth Chapel.
Mass: 5:30pm @ CSC Chapel
Adoration & Confession (except 3/13 & 3/27): 6-8pm CSC Chapel
Gratia Plena (undergrad women's group): 7-8pm

Thursdays

Mass: 5:30pm @ CSC Chapel
Undergrad Core: 6:30-7:30pm @ CSC
Choir Practice, 7-8pm @ CSC
GSYA Core: 7-8pm @ CSC

Fridays:

Rosary group: 5:30-6pm, @ CSC chapel

Special Events:

Grad Student/Young Adult Deepening Retreat

2/16-2/17, @ Il Ritiro Retreat Center

Service Saturday at St. Patrick's Center

2/17, 10am-12pm

CSC Speaker Series

2/21, 7-9pm @ CSC, "Are You Good Enough YET?", Fr. Joe Kempf

Grad Student Spirituality & Professional Life

2/22, 12-1pm @ CSC Living Room

GSYA Social Event

2/23, 7-10pm, SLAM Underground @ St. Louis Art Museum

Spanish Mass

2/28, 3/20, 8-9pm @ CSC

Interfaith Shabbat with Hillel

3/1, time TBD @ Hillel

Gratia Plena Women's Undergrad Retreat

3/1-3/3

Archbishop Rozanski Pastoral Visit to the CSC!!!

Sunday, March 3, 4:30pm Mass & Supper

LGBTQ+ Soul

3/6, 6-7pm @ CSC

NEWMAN WEEK - CELEBRATE A WEEK OF THE CSC!

3/17-3/23 - Various events listed below

SERVICE: Serving dinner at St. Patrick's Center

3/18, 4-7pm

SACRAMENT: Confession Marathon

3/19 2pm-10pm @ CSC

CULTURAL SACRAMENT : Spanish Mass

3/20, 8-9pm @ CSC Chapel

FAITH IQ: Grad Student Spirituality & Professional Life

3/21, 12-1pm @ CSC

PRAYER: Walking Stations of the Cross on Campus

3/22, Time TBD on Danforth Campus (meet @ CSC)

COMMUNITY: CSU Fish Fry (bake)

3/22, 6-7:30pm @ CSC

COMMUNITY: CSU Formal

3/23, Time TBD @ CSC

Online Resources:

Archdiocese of St. Louis: <http://archstl.org/>

Catholic Student Center at WashU: <http://washucsc.org>

Center for Action and Contemplation – Daily Meditations:

<https://cac.org/sign-up/>

Creighton University Spirituality Resources:

<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/>

Dynamic Catholic- Best Lent Ever:

<http://dynamiccatholic.com/bestlentever/#signup>

Hallow App Prayer Resource: <https://hallow.com/>

Loyola Press – Ignatian Spirituality:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent>

United States Catholic Conference of Bishops:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/index.cfm>

Word Among us - Daily Meditations: <https://wau.org/>

Word on Fire, Bishop Barron: <https://www.lentreflections.com/>

A Note from the Director of Ministry:

Lent can be likened to a retreat, a 40 day retreat. On the Second Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of the Transfiguration is always proclaimed. The story of Peter, James, and John going up the mountain with Jesus is a retreat experience for them. They went up that mountain because they needed to be transfigured – changed in ways that would help them see new possibilities for transformative and sacrificial love. This Lent we find ourselves in the midst of a worldwide Synod within the Catholic Church that is culminating with a gathering of delegates in October 2024. A synodal church is one that listens to each other and stretches each other to see how our individual, local, regional, and even national experiences of faith can come together in unity as one faith without losing the flavor and grace of our diversity. This synodal work, which in many ways is the accomplishment of the Risen Christ, “that they may all be one,” is not easy work, and the Lenten Journey prepares us for this work. We can see the Lenten practices of **PRAYER**, **FASTING**, and **ALMSGIVING** show up in the Transfiguration story as helpful tools to prepare us for going back down the mountain transfigured.

In **PRAYER** – the act of retreating – taking time apart from others to be alone with the Lord allows us to see the Lord in new ways and deepen our friendship. Peter, James, and John came to know Jesus truly for who he is on that mountain. Can you spend 10 minutes daily on the mountaintop?

In **FASTING** – the disciples fall to their knees in the presence of God’s voice. Humility is synonymous with fasting, which is about stripping away things in our life that stand in the way of being our best self – sometimes our ego can be the biggest obstacle! So this Lent, let us examine ways we can approach our faith with more humility and in turn encounter others with humility. Can you listen first and speak second?

In **ALMSGIVING** – when the disciples experience the vision of Moses and Elijah, Peter is moved to provide hospitality – to create a place of home for the conversation to happen. In our synodal journey, we are challenged to “enlarge the space of our tent” (which is the motto of the Synod), and during this Lent, that might include helping someone whose tent is in tatters. Can you help someone feel a little more at home in this world?

So we go to the mountaintop like the 3 with Jesus to stretch what we are comfortable with – may the view at the summit during this Lent transfigure and transform us and our faith so we are ready to come back down.

Troy Woytek, CSC Director of Ministry

Introduction to the Booklet:

Welcome to the Lenten Reflection Booklet! This book is composed of student reflections for the daily readings of each day of Lent. Students from all across WashU contributed, and this book encapsulates the different perspectives that make up our great community. I hope that these reflections will help guide you through a fruitful lent.

During Lent, we give things up and adopt new practices to help us grow closer to God over these 40 days. This is a time of learning and observing, stripping away the excess helps us to see God in places He had previously been drowned out in the noise. Use these reflections to center your day; spend time with God in scripture and listen. He is talking to you.

Thank you all for your continued support of this book, and I pray you have a blessed Lent.

Charlie Fioriglio (2026)
CSU Spiritual Chair

HIGHLIGHT: Precepts of the Church

The *Precepts of the Church* describe the minimum requirements of Catholics, with the intent to grow in love of God and neighbor. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2041-2043)

1. Attend Mass on Sundays & holy days of obligation
2. Confess your sins at least once a year
3. Receive Holy Communion (at a minimum) during the Easter season
4. Observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence
5. Provide to the material needs of the Church to your ability

During the Lenten season, we have special emphasis on the 4th precept, fasting on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday and abstaining from meat every Friday.

February 14th - Ash Wednesday

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

If you've ever been to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, you've likely heard the priest or minister say the words "repent and believe in the Gospel" when they make the sign of the cross on your forehead. Similarly on this day, we hear the words "return to the Lord, your God" in the readings. Now you may think that this simply doesn't apply to you because you pray every day or go to Mass every Sunday, even daily Mass. If you read the gospel often, it is easy to think that you believe in it and not take these words to heart. But this is a trap. The Lord knows that each and every one of us needs His grace, no matter where we are in our spiritual journey.

The devil knows this about us too, and he wants us to have nothing to do with the Lord's grace. He follows us and watches us, learning exactly what will separate us from the Lord so that he can destroy us when the time is right. Maybe it is that group of friends that pressures you into doing things that make you uncomfortable when you simply long for community. Maybe it is multitudes of hours that you spend anxious about getting work done, when you really just want to put your strengths at the service of others. Maybe it is lust you feel in your heart when hooking up at parties or watching pornography when you really just want to experience sacrificial love.

But Jesus does not leave us to be overtaken by the devil. "Behold, now is the day of salvation." Jesus is not content with our captivity, and He has come to save us from the weight of our brokenness. We must deny ourselves and follow Him if we are to be saved from our sin. Nothing else can do this for us except Jesus. This Lent, I encourage you to think about where it is you place your faith. Is it your social media status? The amount of money you make? What you are studying? Your significant other? Only Jesus can fulfill us and mend our broken hearts. Turn to Him in everything, and your Father who sees everything will repay you.

Matthew Schwartz, McKelvey '24
Reminder: day of fasting and abstinence from meat

February 15th

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

These readings, which include Moses's admonition to the people that they not stray from the commandments given to him, a psalm reminding us that God is just both in punishments and rewards, and then Our Blessed Lord first telling the people to repent and then telling his disciples to pick up their crosses and follow him may seem to be disconnected at first glance. However, they are all interconnected, insofar as they are all a reminder that it is God, not we, who is sovereign over the universe, who has numbered all of our days (Psalm 139), and thus it is up to us to choose with the time that He has allotted for us. We are presented with a choice: Do we choose the easy way that the "city of man" has presented to us, or do we choose the greater prize that is earned through repentance and sacrifice and made possible by the sacraments.

Furthermore, the readings ask us which we are choosing. Are we choosing to pick up our crosses, or are we choosing the easy way out? As Our Lord, Jesus Christ, reminds us in the reading from Matthew, we must repent, as the Kingdom of heaven is at hand, and it is by our repentance that we can turn towards God, who became man and died for us, and pick up our crosses. It was this God that first presented himself to Moses and led the Israelites out of Egypt, just as he will lead us from sin by his grace and for our sake, that we might glorify him.

Prayer: O Lord, I believe and profess that you are truly Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the first.

Mason Letteau Stallings, Arts & Sciences '25

February 16th

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

Growing up, Lent was not my favorite time of year. I wasn't thrilled about the idea of having to give up something I enjoyed, and the Church's talk of fasting and penance scared me, especially as time went on and I fell deeper and deeper into an eating disorder.

Not much good came out of my eating disorder, but it did provide a starting point for me to reevaluate my relationship with Lent. My journey through recovery was launched one Lent, when I decided my Lenten "penance" would be eating a full three meals a day. This was a turning point towards healing, and this moment allowed me to view Lent as a healing process, rather than a season of grief. Today's gospel captures this feeling when Jesus says "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast" (Mt 9:14-15). In this passage, Jesus encourages us to view Lent as a time for joy, not despair. With this message in mind, I am happy to say that Lent has become my favorite time in the liturgical year.

I pray that we all will hold this message in our hearts as we go through this season. I pray that this Lent will bring you light, peace, and healing. It is my deepest hope that this Lent, we all meet God halfway by entering into Lent with joyous and open hearts.

Mallorie Goodwin, Arts & Sciences '26

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

February 17th

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

Life is filled with uncertainty. This fact was often at the forefront of my mind as I started college; I found it difficult to accept not knowing what lay on the road ahead. I often pondered questions such as: Who do I want to be? What should I major in? When unsure, I resorted to analyzing possible life paths and weighing potential pros and cons of each. Rather than providing me with clarity though, this usually left me more uncertain.

Truthfully I was uncomfortable with the unknown; I was uncomfortable committing and trusting my life to God. As a result, I was living in the future, unable to fully appreciate the present moment.

God does not ask us to have it all figured out; God obliges that we seek to live morally and serve others. In doing so, “the LORD will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden.”

Worrying about and seeking control over an uncertain future is wasted time; it can be paralyzing. Today’s reading reminds us that we can find comfort amidst uncertainty by living a life of love and trusting God. Focus on the present. Do not dwell on the past or live in the future. Discern what is needed from you now: What can you do to become a better version of yourself? How can you use your talents to serve others? What is God asking of you?

Hanna Jachna, Arts & Sciences ‘27

February 18th

Gn 9:8-15
Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Pt 3:18-22
Mk 1:12-15

In this passage God is not only reassuring Noah and his sons that he won't destroy the world with water, but also letting them know that it is up to them to continue spreading his word and replenishing life.

God used Noah and the animals as a covenant. Similarly, the symbolic rainbow underscores God's promise to never again destroy humanity with water. It demonstrates God's divine mercy and love He has for us and commitment to His creation.

Just like God is counting on Noah to spread his word and bring society back, God wants us to go into the world and practice and preach his teachings in our daily lives. When I say preach his teachings, I not only mean to verbally express them, but by our everyday actions such as helping others in need, supporting passions, and practicing forgiveness, thus contributing to the restoration of a positive and compassionate society.

Jordana Brenes Vega, Sam Fox '26

February 19th

Lv 19:1-2, 11-18
Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15
Mt 25:31-46

Today's readings connect wonderfully to reveal God's desire for us to love Him and others. In the reading from Leviticus 19, Moses shares instructions from God which are essentially a rephrasing and expansion of the Ten Commandments.

In reading the Psalm for today, we are struck with several lines which basically say the same thing: "The law of the Lord is perfect," "The decree of the Lord is trustworthy," etc. If you were to read this psalm on its own, a quick reflection might prompt the question: Okay, what is the law of the Lord? Thankfully, the answer was given to us in Leviticus 19. Amongst many things, one of our greatest ambitions as Catholics is to be Christlike. I would suggest that some words related to "Christlike" are: perfect, trustworthy, pure, right. These, of course, are the same words that today's psalm uses to describe God's commandments. Therefore, if we follow God's instructions for how to worship Him and how to treat others, then we live Christlike lives.

Then I ask, How am I supposed to follow these centuries-old instructions in the world today? The Gospel reading from Matthew 25 gives us a good idea. It details how on the day of judgment, God will reward those who: fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, and so on. I am reminded of one of the three pillars of Lent: almsgiving. These readings should encourage us to be a servant to others this season. This can take the form of volunteering at a charity, sharing food with people experiencing homelessness, or just being present with a friend.

Lastly, think about how magnificent Heaven will be if it is full of people who lived their life loving others according to the instructions we read today. I believe that, by following these instructions and loving others generously, we create communities that give us a glimpse of what Heaven will be like.

Will Giffen, McKelvey '24

February 20th

Is 55: 10-11
Ps 34: 4-7, 16-19
Mt 6: 7-15

The goodness of God's will strikes me the most when reflecting upon today's passages. In the first reading we see how God's word is fruitful; it comes down from Heaven with purpose to help us abide by His will. The Responsorial Psalm helps us to understand how and why sacrificing ourselves to God's will is so beautiful. It says four times, "from all their distress God rescues the just." He hears our cries, answers us when we seek Him, and delivers us from fear and brokenness. How incredible is it to know that we can follow, seek, and call out to God and he will deliver? It gives me so much hope to know that God is with us. His will is worth submitting to, more so than my own desires and wishes. We should offer up our desires, letting His will be done in our lives. This is explicitly said by Christ in today's Gospel; we are called to pray the Our Father, saying that God's will is to be done.

Another part of the Gospel that sticks out to me is Jesus saying, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him." It brings me so much peace to know that prayer doesn't have to be perfect; it doesn't require profound language, or lots of words. Instead, God knows what we need and will deliver so long as we seek Him, are faithful, and submit to His will. I find it reassuring to know that God understands me and He's listening despite any confusion in my language or imperfection. And when we call out to Him and yield to His will, He listens, He understands, and He delivers. How beautiful is that?

Audrey Egly, Olin '24

February 21st

Jon 3:1-10
Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19
Lk 11:29-32

In today's reading, we can see that we are all equal under God, no matter who we are. Things like our wealth, status, or age become futile under God. Even the mighty king stepped away from his wealthy and lavish life to repent for his sins and try to gain mercy from God. I doubt anyone can confidently say what God wants at all times. Even when the citizens of Nineveh turned their attitude and stepped away from their evil ways, they still were not sure if these actions were enough for God's forgiveness. No one exactly knows what God wants. Some might say attending Church every Sunday is enough to repent one's sins. Some might say you have to fast and tempt away from every sin one can imagine. However, I think today's reading tells us that the specific course of action we take does not matter as much as the belief and heart we put in. There might or might not be one true specific way to please God, but I think that the best we can do is try our best to live our best life and let God judge whether we lived a good, honest life.

Tim Chung, Arts & Sciences '24

February 22nd - The Chair of St. Peter

1 Pt 5:1-4
Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6
Mt 16:13-19

In today's Gospel, Jesus addresses His Apostle Simon Peter saying, "you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." Peter, whose name means rock, establishes a firm foundation for the Church. Jesus then entrusts Peter with the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. In this moment, Christ institutes apostolic succession and the continued living Church we are so familiar with nearly 2000 years later.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle, let us reflect on the leaders and teachers in our own lives. Who are the leaders of our Church and society? Who are our leaders more locally, in our families, at the CSC, and other communities around campus?

While Jesus endows Peter with this great responsibility, we know Peter was not a perfect person. Despite Peter's brokenness and past mistakes, Jesus believed in his potential to rise to the occasion. He prepares Peter for his mission in the Church. Take a moment to ask for the intercession of St. Peter today as you grow in your Lenten convictions. How might your Lenten practice shape you into a better leader and teacher?

As Jesus appointed Peter to lead the Church, He continues to invite us to be co-creators within the Church. How is God asking us to be co-creators within the Church and in our communities at WashU? What leadership roles do you assume on and off campus? Who looks up to you? Like Peter, do you lead with humility and a servant's heart?

Mary Kate Charles, Sam Fox '24

February 23rd

Ez 18:21-28
Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8
Mt 5:20-26

After reading through the Gospel for this first Friday of Lent, the overwhelming theme of forgiveness and penance towards your neighbor provides an interesting call for how we should treat others. Jesus prefaces this by restating the “you shall not kill” commandment (which is often seen as the commandment that is the easiest to follow) to place greater emphasis on the pain that anger and resentment cause. For Jesus, an individual holding a grudge against their neighbor or rudely treating their neighbor will be “liable to judgment,” similar to those who kill another human being. The graveness associated with the unjust treatment of a neighbor greatly highlights the Golden Commandment’s statement of “love your neighbor as you love yourself,” illustrating that we have an innate desire and need to associate with others in a positive way.

It is often easy to simply hold a grudge or not forgive due to our perception of the situation, potentially leading us to think that the situation is not that big of a deal and that we don’t have a reason to forgive the other person. Forgiveness, innately, admits that another person wronged us and that we want to rebuild/preserve that relationship with another person. Essentially, we are setting aside our pride to preserve the relationship and grow together in love. Holding a grudge and not forgiving/not accepting forgiveness can come in a multitude of forms, as Jesus mentions, such as through gossip or anger. Jesus offers us an alternative guideline to how we should handle these emotions, stating that we should always seek reconciliation before we offer intentions or praise to God. This passage highlights an important method to handling emotions and relationships that we can carry with us through the rest of this Lenten season.

Juan Sanchez, Arts & Sciences ‘25

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

February 24th

Dt 26:16-19
Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8
Mt 5:43-48

Today's gospel includes a word that is difficult for many of us to come to terms with: perfect. How can Jesus tell us to be perfect, when we are all sinners and cannot achieve perfection? Let's look instead at the idea that perfect is not the absence of mistakes, but instead a goal. The goal to align every aspect of our being with God's will and His ways. When looking at it this way, his call to be perfect makes a little more sense. After all, Jesus specifies the kind of perfect he means: "just as your heavenly Father is perfect." The word used in Greek is *teleios* and conveys a meaning of completeness, maturity, attaining one's goal. So, Jesus may be telling us that we must set ourselves to God's standard—His perfection—rather than trying to achieve human morality. We are not called to the morality set by the current state of the world. Loving those who it is easy to love and treating kindly those who treat you kindly is not difficult, but it is often "enough" in this world to be considered good. This is not the radical love that Jesus calls us to. Loving those who make it difficult to love them is the higher standard, the truer "perfection," that we are called to live out. Yes we are called to avoid sin, but maybe his "perfect" is more focused on whether or not we are aligning all of ourselves to his will instead of the world's and the rest will follow.

Emily Swoboda, Arts & Sciences '25

February 25th

Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19

Rom 8:31b-34

Mk 9:2-10

As we enter the second Sunday of Lent, we are blessed with three readings that center on the importance of listening to God and acting upon our faith. Our first reading comes from Genesis and is well-known to many. We see God calling out to Abraham twice, and in both instances, Abraham is faithful in responding to the Lord: “Here I am.” As Abraham faithfully listens, taking his only son Isaac to be sacrificed to the Lord, God stops him, because he is faithful. He blesses him abundantly for obeying His command. We see an important name for God used here by Abraham, being Jehovah Jireh: “the Lord will provide.”

The structure of this story is then mimicked in the second reading from Romans, where Paul writes that because God handed over His only son Jesus, in order to save us all, we will be given everything we need by and through Him. Again, we see elements from the first reading and the Gospel aligning, as Jesus takes Peter, James, and John to the mountain top. He is transfigured before them, and a voice from a cloud spoke, saying, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” In all of these readings, we see the importance of listening to God, and remaining faithful to His word. As we trust fully in His plan—even when we cannot see what is to come—our faith is truly lived out. May we always respond, “Here I am,” knowing that the Lord will provide.

Maria Siciliano, English ‘28

February 26th

Dn 9:4b-10
Ps 79:8, 9, 11 and 13
Lk 6:36-38

No one likes to be judged or looked down upon. Yet, the act of judging is rather easy to get sucked into doing if you don't put much thought into it. Undeniably, we all occasionally fall into poor habits, such as judging others or acting envious, that do not represent our true character or intentions.

In today's gospel, Luke 6, it says, "For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you" —which may seem somewhat difficult to decipher if the word "measure" wasn't mentioned enough for you. Yet, this verse unpacks a valuable lesson. God is saying that whatever you do will ultimately come back around. However, you "measure out" is how God will "measure" you. This can entail all sorts of things, such as treating a person with kindness, or, on the flip side, spreading a false rumor about someone. Whatever the situation may be, your actions, in return, will determine how your character measures. It is in this way that you must evaluate how you want to be treated and regarded. Do you want to be shown respect? Treat others with respect. One thing is for certain, the act of living life with a mindful heart is much more difficult to do rather than to speak about. Yet, no one is asking for you to live a perfect life—we all make mistakes. Instead, living a life where you treat others with kindness and forgiveness will result in a life that is more kind and forgiving to you.

So, how would you like to be thought of? Whatever your response may be, act upon it!

Bryn Bahnks, Arts & Sciences '27

February 27th

Is 1:10, 16-20
Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23
Mt 23:1-12

Today's Gospel reading mentions many groups of people—the crowds, disciples, scribes, and Pharisees. Preaching to the crowds and disciples, Jesus demonstrates the importance of selfless humility through the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus is pretty clever here and subtly mentions the hypocrisy of the Israeli leaders while informing the crowd of the importance of embracing servanthship. In so many aspects of our lives, the lowest is seen as the “worst” or “unsuccessful.” But the Bible challenges us to reframe this mindset and humble ourselves through putting others first and refraining from seeking out praise for our works. Jesus emphasizes this by declaring that the scribes and Pharisees’ “works are performed to be seen,” implying an intention for admiration rather than service.

It is definitely easier said than done to live this way, and it doesn't mean we have to deny those who commend us deservedly. Those times where we are positioned with respect and authority, the most praiseworthy work is done by uplifting the least fortunate. But even in the times where we are at our lowest, maintaining a selfless perspective will eventually bring exaltation. It's comforting to know that, wherever we are, there is an opportunity to serve others and have a positive impact.

Kaitlin Day, McKelvey '24

February 28th

Jer 18:18-20
Ps 31:5-6, 14, 15-16
Mt 20:17-28

In today's reading Jeremiah warned the people of the hardship they will endure if they don't repent. The people refused to believe what he was saying, so Jeremiah was criticized and plotted against even though he was trying to save them.

In the Gospel, the mother of James and John asks Jesus for her sons to receive a privileged place in Jesus' Kingdom. This offends the ten apostles but Jesus shifts the focus on the servitude of their mission. He says that world leaders emphasize their power to others while this mission is different; greatness comes from serving others, not from being in charge, as Jesus himself came to serve and sacrifice his life for many. In every corner, people are fighting for control, seeking popularity, and striving to outshine others for personal satisfaction. However, we often overlook the fact that winning and power, though pursued constantly, don't bring true fulfillment. God has bestowed upon each of us a unique gift or talent, intended not for self-serving purposes but to benefit others. Despite the possibility of going unnoticed or facing criticism, God's grace encourages us to assist one another and glorify Jesus. It is through these selfless acts that I've found a sense of purpose and encountered genuine greatness. Our role as servants of Jesus is not about seeking recognition but about embracing a purposeful way of life and helping others.

Mo Reyes, McKelevy '26

February 29th

Jer 17:5-10
Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6
Lk 16:19-31

As we're reminded of in today's readings, Jesus never forces our beliefs. Rather he pursues us day in and day out, patiently waiting. Lazarus (separate from him whom Jesus raised from the dead), though poor in flesh and material goods, was rich in spirit. Because of this, he was ultimately rewarded for his trust in the Lord and holding on tightly to his relationship with Christ.

To use an analogy from Fr. Brian, Jesus is always sitting with His cup of coffee, reclined in his comfy chair, eager and ready with His open heart to listen. He wants to hear our rants, our fears, our successes, and about our days that are just 'meh.' Much like the strong friendships we form at college and work, checking in with God is vital to strengthening our spiritual connection so that during a "year of drought, [we show] no distress, but still [bear] fruit."

Last semester, I invited several friends outside of the CSC to Mass, hoping they would somehow feel the same way I did about an active faith life. Although a few joined, many have yet to come. And that's okay. Although it's a tough pill to swallow, we should know that if someone really wants to do something, they will—whatever their own timeline is. In the case of Christ, He's already put Himself out there, and now the ball's in our court to do something about it.

Take some time to reflect on your current relationships, as well as those which have faded away or those which you're hoping to solidify in the coming months. When have others assured you of your relationship during times when they couldn't be present? In what ways can you actively demonstrate your desire to further deepen these relationships?

Josh Elboom, Sam Fox '26

March 1st

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a
Ps 105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21
Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

In today's readings, we hear two stories that, in many ways, mirror each other. The first reading is the story of Joseph being rejected by his brothers, but we know he will eventually return to become their savior. The Gospel is the story of Jesus warning the religious leaders against their false judgments of Him. They too reject Jesus, but we know He will eventually die and resurrect to become our own savior. The themes which come to mind for me after reflecting on today's readings are rejection, judgment, and love.

Rejection: Twice today, the rejected one becomes the savior. We are reminded that God loves the lowest among us, and we are already given a glimpse of the events we will celebrate at the end of Lent. God, please help me to accept all people as your children and to be worthy of your saving grace.

Judgment: Today we see Joseph's brothers and the religious leaders be confident in their misguided judgments. We are reminded that not everything is always as it seems, and that God has a plan for each of us.

God, please help me to judge less, seek to understand more, and trust in the plan you have for me.

Love: Even with the intimidating readings, today we also hear one of the most beloved verses of the Bible, John 3:16: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son; so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life."

God, thank you for your unconditional, endless love.

Kate Flynn, Arts & Sciences '24

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

March 2nd

Mi 7:14-15, 18-20
Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Growing up, I viewed the Parable of the Prodigal Son as a lesson on how God forgives all repentant sinners. Continuing in my faith journey, I sought to understand what the older son teaches us about our relationship with God. Many of us can recall times when our commitment to daily prayer, Sunday Mass, and benevolent acts wavered. Perhaps we thought our efforts were wasted, or that it would be easier to only turn to God when it was convenient or rewarding. The importance of continual commitment to a relationship with God became fully apparent to me during the hardest part of my pre-med curriculum. Just as the father says in the parable, “My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours,” staying close to God immerses you in the gift of His unconditional love, allowing Him to guide you through challenging times and provide you with the strength to persevere.

Take this Lent to consider which son you best identify with. Are you the younger son, feeling the emptiness of distancing yourself from God’s love? Or are you the older son, feeling insufficiently rewarded for all your hard work? Today’s parable reminds us that our Father is always there to meet us when we fall short, ready to welcome us with open arms when we return to His kingdom or to remind us of His ultimate gift of unconditional love in times of discouragement. Commitment to God may not result in a “party”, but experiencing His desire to guide, carry, and unconditionally love each of us makes the daily act of serving God well worth it.

Jessica Bigley, School of Medicine ‘26

March 3rd

Ex 20:1-17
Ps 19:8-11
1 Cor 1:22-25
Jn 2:13-25

This Sunday's Gospel passage narrates the well-known story of Jesus throwing a fit in the temple. Reading over the passage, the image of Jesus overturning tables and driving out money changers brings to mind a common theme in Lent: personal and spiritual purification. Lent invites me to introspect, much like Jesus did in the temple. The tables in my own life, cluttered with worldly concerns and distractions, need to be overturned. It's a season to reflect on the sacred spaces within me—my heart, mind, and soul—and to ensure that they remain dedicated to communion with God. The temple symbolizes the dwelling place of God, and I see parallels in my own spiritual journey. There are aspects of my life that may have strayed from their sacred purpose. Lent beckons me to emulate Jesus, to be courageous in confronting and cleansing those areas that hinder my closeness to God.

Just as Jesus foreshadows his redemptive work through the temple cleansing, Lent reminds me of the transformative power of Christ in my life. It's a time to embrace the purification offered through his sacrifice, aligning my journey with the promise of resurrection. This Lent, I am challenged to identify the distractions and impurities within me, seeking a personal cleansing that aligns with the larger narrative of redemption. The story of Jesus in the temple becomes an intimate call to self-examination, spiritual discipline, and a renewed commitment to draw closer to God as I anticipate the joy of Easter.

Mason Leffler, Arts & Sciences '25

March 4th

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

Today's Lenten readings showcase some aspects of who Jesus was that I feel I often forget about in the complexity of who He is. While the idea behind "What would Jesus do" is crystal clear in concept, it is easy to forget some of the harder-to-stomach things Jesus did. We remember and try to embody Jesus dining with the sinners but do we remember how He called out the most powerful men in society? When we remember Jesus' bravery, do we remember Jesus' bravery in facing His death on the Cross without remembering His bravery in taking the actions that led to His death? Do we remember that Jesus stirred controversy by standing in front of His townspeople and proclaiming Himself the Messiah or by healing a man on the Sabbath? Do we remember how He entered the Temple and flipped the moneychangers' tables or how He stirred controversy by promising to destroy the Temple?

When I think of Lent, I think of Jesus' hardest and most inspiring moments. We cannot forget that Jesus was revolutionary and challenged the status quo in order to fulfill His mission. In a weird, paradoxical way, it sometimes seems like dying on the Cross is something we're more ready to do than to be controversial. As Lent continues, we all find ourselves called to follow in Jesus' footsteps, and while we cannot pick and choose which parts of His example to follow, we can be comforted in knowing His plan for us is good.

Will Labrador, Arts & Sciences '24

March 5th

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

In today's gospel, Jesus offers a powerful lesson on forgiveness. If we look around, we see many examples of how we are failing to forgive, failing to love. Wars, the death penalty, cancel culture, just to name a few. Fr. Mike Schmitz's beautiful and practical reflection on how to approach forgiveness has been incredibly helpful to me, so I will share some of that wisdom here. He posits that forgiveness must be rooted in justice, where someone has cost us something and therefore something is owed. The first step he proposes is to acknowledge that one has been hurt, or that something was taken. Next, one must be aware of what and how much one is owed, like the master does in today's parable with the servant. Finally, forgiveness is ultimately the decision to say, "I release you from your debt." While justice demands that what is cost be repaid, Fr. Mike Schmitz shares that forgiveness is saying, "I'm not going to make you pay me back." This can be incredibly hard, especially when the hurt is so deep. It is only through Christ that we can have the strength to do so. The sacrament of reconciliation is so special in that the Lord offers us his outpouring of forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration, and gives us real graces so that we can have the courage to extend the same to others. What are some ways you can extend the gift of forgiveness to others this Lent?

Clarissa Gaona Romero, Brown School '25

March 6th

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

My immediate feelings when I reflect on this passage is the call of both listening and living out the word of Jesus. Jesus speaks powerfully through his word; I often must take a step back as it is my nature to view God in the Old Testament as “harsh”. Through reflecting I can reconcile both the authoritative and merciful ideals that make up a perfect and loving God. We are held to a standard set by Christ, that when lived out, will set us apart in heaven. When we both listen and live a life dedicated to the commandants of God, we will not only feel the difference in our lives but reflect the spirit of Christ to those who walk alongside us in this life. It can often feel more difficult to be constantly held to the standards of Christ as Catholics. When my faith is tested in my obedience to God, I remind myself that his commandments are out of love, protection, and true peace. Pursuing life with Christ is a choice, and we must fight to remember beauty that results from obedience in God’s plan and word. I am enamored by the gift of tangible instruction to live a life like Christ. I encourage you to open your heart and your actions to the influence of Jesus.

Payton Price, Doctors in Physical Therapy ‘24

March 7th

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

“If you hear His voice, harden not your hearts”

Doubt can feel inescapable that this quote feels trivial. Lord, how could I meet Your voice, knowledge of Your existence, with anything other than joy, or relief that I can finally put to rest the constant battle of convincing myself of You. I envy the clarity that the prophets saw God with, but I forget the immense cost that relationship comes with.

In today's gospel people greet miracles with doubt, as is seen so often, and I pose the same objection that this couldn't be my reaction. However, in moments of honesty I can see where I go wrong: that my objection is one rooted in envy, and built on a lie I tell myself. I tell myself that I don't have God's presence like the prophets did, that I can't know God like the apostles, as a way to excuse myself from giving God what He deserves. I label inattentiveness as God's absence, and I expect Him to remind me to make time for prayer. I find myself trapped in the loop of not making time for spiritual practices and then get frustrated when I feel empty.

I see myself reflected in the people witnessing Jesus cast out demons. I would rather ignore God than recognize Him. I am scared he will see me in all my failure to live like Jesus, see all the times I've favored convenience over kindness. It is this fear, this shame, that distorts God's true nature. We must remember that God is loving above all else. Noticing God everywhere, and He truly is everywhere, does not come with the burden of being perfect, but rather the liberation of being loved in our imperfection. If we resolve to see and live with God, we will all find that He asks nothing more than our presence, but gives more than we could know.

Charlie Fioriglio, Arts & Sciences '26

March 8th

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

It is now around halfway through Lent, and in this reading, God shows us his power and the salvation he gives to those who follow him. “‘I am like a verdant cypress tree’ – Because of me you bear fruit!” This line from today’s Lenten reading sums it up nicely. Your faith in God and love for others will prove fruitful. At the end of the passage, it reads, “Straight are the paths of the LORD, in them the just walk, but sinners stumble in them.” Temptation is a difficult force and can pull us away from what God has in mind for us, but recognizing everything God has done for us and His promise for eternal life can bring us back to this path.

Think back over the past few weeks of Lent; how has resisting temptation brought you closer to God or helped you deepen your relationship with Him and with others? What has God done for you, and where has He been present in your life, even in the smallest of moments? For me, resisting moments of temptation during Lent and trying to adhere to my sacrifices allows me to be present with God. Anytime I have a moment of triumph over temptation, I always think of God, and these many moments of awareness throughout Lent help me grow my relationship with God and be more mindful of my actions.

This reading outlines His power. Think of the person you could become if you grow your relationship with Him.

Charlie Schach, Olin ‘26

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

March 9th

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

What does it look like to be actually humble before the Lord? I don't know about you, but when I *try* to be humble, I realize just how much I'm trying to prove, to do on my own. It's laughable, almost an oxymoron: I'm doing great at being humble! Oh wait.

I can be embarrassingly much like that Pharisee—trying to justify myself, striving to be good enough, worrying over the edges of my tithe and neglecting the love meant to be at the heart of it. When I'm convinced of my own righteousness the most, I love the least. What if instead of thanking the Lord that I'm not like the greedy, lying sinners of the world, I celebrated that Jesus welcomes all of us broken sinners into his merciful, healing, refreshing, compassionate embrace? Being broken means that we get to go to the Healer, that he will bind our wounds with his very own, gentle hand.

Maybe that's the secret to a less oxymoronic humility. When we focus on our lack and God's mercy instead of our sacrifice and God's judgment, we end up encountering both God and neighbor. So let's "strive to know the Lord" more like the tax collector and less like the Pharisee. Less like we're trying to be seen and justified and more like we're desperate for the mercy and goodness of the Healer himself.

Stephanie Wormleighton
School of Law & Social Work, '24

March 10th

2 Chr 36: 14-16, 19-23

Ps 137: 1-6

Eph 2:4-10

Jn 3:14-21

In Today's gospel, Jesus said to Nicodemus that " Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (v. 14), clearly referring to the episode of the journey through the desert when the Hebrews looked at a bronze serpent and were healed (cf. Num 21:8-9). The image of the "lifting up" of Jesus naturally refers to the cross. The dialogue continues with Jesus explaining that this will happen because of God's great love for humanity, to the extent of giving His only Son for the salvation of all. However, this sacrifice is not the sole act necessary for salvation because man must make his choice in the face of God's offer of salvation. The gospel tells us that men need to believe to be saved (v. 18); they need to prefer the light (v. 19) and live the truth (v. 21).

Reflecting on this gospel, I recalled the Renaissance work titled "The Creation of Adam" by Michelangelo. The bodies of God and Adam are arranged so that there is a notable proximity between them, especially in the region of the hands. It would take minimal effort for the man to touch the finger of God. Despite the artwork representing creation, I propose looking at it from the perspective of salvation. Don't we just need to stretch our fingers to touch the salvation that comes from God? After all, "Salvation is offered to all but requires a personal and free response from each individual." (Saint John Paul II).

As long as we remain trapped in the darkness of our mistakes and the flaws of others, the salvation of the Lord will find no place in our hearts. Let us choose to prefer the light of Christ over the darkness that prevents us from experiencing the love of God.

Paloma P. Santiago, McKelvey '27

March 11th

Is 65:17-21
Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b
Jn 4:43-54

In today's Gospel reading, we witness an encounter between Jesus and a desperate father.

The royal official seeks out Jesus, imploring Him to come home with him to heal his dying son. Initially, Jesus responds somewhat harshly to the official, saying, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." Here, Jesus is essentially challenging the official to believe in Him without actually witnessing a physical miracle take place. Jesus is asking the distressed father to take a leap of faith and trust His word. When Jesus tells the official, "You may go; your son will live," the father rises to Jesus' challenge. He takes Jesus at his word and returns home to discover the miraculous healing of his son.

For me, this passage is a powerful reminder to step up, be brave, and place my trust in God in my most vulnerable and desperate moments. As a self-proclaimed control freak, letting go of my own plans and expectations and surrendering myself to those of the Lord is not something that I find particularly easy to do. However, I've found that when I'm able to muster up the courage to place my worries into the arms of the Lord and trust in Him completely, the experience is transformative. I often come away feeling closer to God than ever before.

The official's story invites us all to release our anxieties and place unwavering faith in the words of the One who offers true healing. I personally know how challenging and scary this process can be, but taking this leap of faith can be truly life-changing.

Sofia Then, Arts & Sciences '25

March 12th

Ez 47:1-9, 12
Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
Jn 5:1-16

The readings today all talk about water. In the first reading, we hear an angel telling Ezekiel that the river flowing out of the temple brings life to everywhere it flows, and another stream “whose runlets gladden the city of God” is mentioned in the Responsorial Psalm. This week is spring break for WashU undergraduates, and some are likely traveling to a body of water. For those who are traveling, take this time away from the busyness of classes to reflect and be “made fresh.” However, also note that in the Gospel we hear about those who are sick or disabled seeking healing in the Pool of Bethesda, but it is Jesus who heals the paralyzed man, not the pool. It is good to seek rejuvenation from travel, a warm body of water, or a week off of classes, but ultimately God is the best healer.

A second thing that strikes me about the Gospel is that Jesus was persecuted for healing the man on the Sabbath. He has just performed a miracle, yet his opponents look for any reason they can find to still criticize him! Maybe take a minute to consider whether you ever act this way towards others, or towards yourself.

William Carter, School of Medicine '27

March 13th

Is 49:8-15
Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18
Jn 5:17-30

Several kids are walking home from school, all bundled up, and one child pauses to tie her shoe. Does the group wait? Or does the little girl get left behind and jog to catch up?

We all have been the one tying his or her shoe, and, though difficult to admit, we all have been part of the group that kept on walking. It's easy to make excuses — it's cold! It's no big deal! or simply I don't want to!

That doesn't change the fact that when we leave someone behind, we communicate something to them: that they are not essential. That feeling of being forgotten, of being replaceable, is painful. Many people spend their lives waiting to be chosen. We all want to be important enough to not be forgotten.

Jesus knows we feel this because he knows us. He knows us intimately, which is, ultimately, what so many of us desire — for someone to notice and love everything about ourselves, even the things we don't notice. Even the things we don't like. Because of this, God knows every excuse that could be given to not stop for us; he stops anyway, and not out of obligation. He wants to.

In the first reading, God asks us, "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you." God chooses us and loves us always, and he chose us on the Cross. We too are called to love others in his example.

Will you wait for the child to tie her shoe? Can you be that person for someone?

Mia Burkholder, Arts & Sciences '26

March 14th

Ex 32:7-14
Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23
Jn 5:31-47

In the Gospel reading, Jesus utilizes an interesting approach to try to get the Jews to understand that He is the son of God. Employing legal precedent, He urges the Jews to see reason. He does not testify on His own behalf. In the courts of the time, this would not be sufficient proof. One could not be trusted to provide an unbiased account in matters in which they were involved.

Rather, He points to three pieces of evidence that He is the Messiah: testimony by John, His own acts, and the Scriptures. By referencing these sources, Jesus gives testimony that the Jews could appreciate. In other words, He does not resort to requiring their blind faith. He shows them reason based on their standards, hoping that they can appreciate Him.

At the same time, He scolds them for not trusting that He is the Messiah despite God's word. He chastises their actions as they choose to praise each other while simultaneously failing to seek God's praise.

God wants us to have a trusting relationship with Him. He wants to grow close with us. During this Lenten season, we can use prayer to enhance our own relationship with God. We can find ways to trust in Him. He truly loves us so much. And by setting our lives in God, we can find peace and joy along the way.

Joseph Berglund, Arts & Sciences '24

March 15th

Wis 2:1a, 12-22
Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23
Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

We know that God has a plan for us. But many times it's a mystery. I know that I get really antsy over these things. If I knew exactly what God was calling me to do in this world, things would be a lot easier. So when will it be revealed? In fact, I find myself asking the question “when?” a whole lot. When will my next great encounter with Jesus be? When will I feel holier? Today's gospel reassures me greatly, along with a perfect plan, God also has a perfect timing for us. In the end of the gospel, there is an attempt to arrest Jesus, but “no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not yet come”. I love this passage because there is no reason why he should not have been arrested except for the most powerful one: God's timing. I am at peace, whatever god's will is, also has a time which is just as important. There is no need to fret, god knows when and that's all we need.

Luc Bourgeade, Arts & Sciences '27

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

March 16th

Jer 11:18-20
Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12
Jn 7:40-53

In this gospel, the people who heard the words of Jesus became divided. Some truly believed that Jesus is the Christ, but some were skeptical, due to his Galilean heritage which was not prophesied. The guards sent to arrest Jesus came back empty handed. When asked why by the Pharisees, the guards confessed that no one has ever spoken like Jesus has, and they were compelled not to arrest him. The Pharisees expressed their disappointment to the guards, but one of them, Nicodemus, spoke up. He scorned the Pharisees' decision to condemn Jesus without first hearing him out.

This reading reminds us to become aware of quick judgments. We are reminded not to jump to conclusions, as the Pharisees did with Jesus. They were quick to condemn him because of where he came from. However, the guards who heard his words were forced to overcome their initial assumptions about Jesus because they came to know who he truly was. Nicodemus was the only one who looked upon the situation with understanding, as he realized none of the Pharisees had actually heard the words of Jesus like the guards had. As controversy over Jesus and his identity arose, Nicodemus acted as a voice of reason. Today, let us pray for openness to understanding in our lives.

Cynthia Viets, Sam Fox '25

March 17th

Jer 31:31-34
Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15
Heb 5:7-9
Jn 12:20-33

Today's readings touch on a variety of topics, but there is one that overwhelmingly shines through not just in today's readings, but in the entire Bible: sacrificial love. It is our natural tendency to value and to love what others can do for us. However, Christ calls us to love others by thinking of what we can do for them. In today's readings, Jesus gives us the parable of the grain of wheat in which he tells us that "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." It is so easy in life to remain safe and sound in our comfort zone, but for us to truly love and to truly follow Christ, we must be willing to completely disregard our own wants for the good of others. Being fully human, Jesus felt the fear and grief of what was to come for Him in His Passion, yet for our sakes He submitted to it without resentment or anger. This Lent, we should work to fearlessly love others and to think of how we can improve the lives of those around us.

Matthew Denton, Arts & Sciences '25

March 18th

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

We begin today's spiritual meditation with our first reading, in which God reveals the dishonesty of elder judges who falsely accuse adultery of Susanna whose faithfulness in Him frees her from the threat of execution. Following the Responsorial Psalm, in which we remind ourselves of God's comforting presence, we hear today's Gospel reading. In this reading, the Pharisees test Jesus, presenting a woman who had committed adultery and asking how the issue be addressed. Jesus directs for the first among the onlookers who is without sin to throw a stone at her... so everyone left without throwing a stone. Since no one had condemned the woman, Jesus bade her forgiveness.

Today's readings remind us that we are never alone when fighting our own battles. Susanna's leaning on God during a time of need not only reminds us of the power of leaning on God in difficult moments but also helps us remember that God will always believe in the goodness of our true nature. We are all humans with both good and bad within. As such, who are we to be angry at the faults of others, when we all fight our own battles? Even in the midst of these battles, no matter how dark they get, we are never alone because God is always by our side.

Even when it feels like the world is against us, prayer gives us the support and strength that we need. In the end we are loved. That alone can give us courage.

Ingrid Piazza, Sam Fox '26

**Confession Marathon tomorrow
2pm-10pm @ CSC**

March 19th: Feast of St. Joseph

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

Today we celebrate one of the greatest feast days of the liturgical year, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph. He is a man of no words in the Bible, and yet his actions speak volumes about what it means to be righteous. What it means to have faith. In the second reading, Paul tells the Romans that “it was not through the law...but through the righteousness that comes from faith” that we are promised the inheritance of the world. I can’t even imagine the faith or resolve it took Joseph to trust in the message from God and take Mary – an unwed, pregnant woman – into his home. Today’s readings call us to do the Lord’s will, sometimes as Joseph did. With little words, listening, and a lot of trust. Too, there is also a reminder to reach out to our brothers and sisters in Christ, those on this earth and those who have passed. I was once told to ask for the intercession of St. Joseph because he is such a good listener. Through having open ears and open hearts, we can follow his example and continue to inherit the joys and gifts that God has in store for us.

Jenny Nguyen, Brown School ‘25

March 20th

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

We see three men of God stand up to a treacherously misleading ruler even in the face of great persecution. Are we not similarly misled to put our own desires before our desire for God? Do we not so easily worship the false gods that are in our phone? Our culture tells us to believe certain things, or we will be cast out of society and burned with the hate of society. Is this fire that could burn us greater than the fire these three men suffered? God is calling us to follow him, even if it may mean suffering a burning persecution. For if God can save us, let Him save us, but even if he does not save our bodies, we will worship the Lord who saves our soul. “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I.” These men of God are gathered in God’s name and there is one like the Son of God in their midst.

In the Gospel, we see Jesus talking about slavery and freedom. If we follow the idols of this world, we will be their slave, but if we follow Christ, even into the burning fire, we shall be truly free. Where Christ is, so is the Father, for Christ did not come on His own, and the Holy Spirit is with them in that interchange of love.

Take a couple minutes this day to pray and meditate on the psalms of today, for Blessed is the Lord who gives us all we have.

Nicholas Rackers, Art & Sciences ‘29

March 21st

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

In the Gospel reading for today, we read Jesus' potentially confusing and yet essential statement: "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM." The controversy surrounding this statement is that I AM is the English translation of the name God revealed to Moses in the burning bush: YAHWEH. Jesus makes the claim that He is the God of Moses, Isaac, and Jacob. However, even before resorting to His claim to be YAHWEH, Jesus maintains: "...it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'" This is a more subtle claim to be God that the Jews cannot believe. Jesus then doubles down by using the name of God that was considered blasphemous to speak out loud. This interaction with Jesus might seem a little one-sided if we do not take into account the first reading. This is not the first time that God has revealed Himself to humanity and Jesus was trying to communicate that He was God revealing Himself again. Jesus knew that the Jews were familiar with the Torah and the laws contained within it. However by claiming to be God and appropriately defending Himself, the Jews retaliate rather than yield to Jesus they cannot believe that their God has come to them. This is in spite of the Psalmist's exhortation: "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

So today I encourage you to keep an open mind, heart, and soul to God's voice. In what areas do you refuse to listen to God? Why?

Zane Watson, McKelvey 24'

March 22nd

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

On the Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent we see Jeremiah, in the first reading, being attacked by those who once claimed to be his friends. Despite his persecution, Jeremiah sings his praises to the Lord. Later, in the Gospel reading, Jesus finds himself being stoned by his enemies as they accuse him of blasphemy. They claim, “You, a man, are making yourself God.” Jesus attempts to remind them that they too are gods, for we are all the sons and daughters of God, but to no avail. I find it interesting to look at the Gospel reading through the eyes of those who were casting stones at Jesus. When we read about scenarios like this, it is so easy to put ourselves on a pedestal claiming, “Oh, I would never do that!” But when we take a closer look, we realize just how guilty we are. In my own times of weakness, I find it difficult to consider myself a god. I refuse to admit that I am deserving of love no matter my situation. I think we all do, so we cast those negative feelings onto those we are jealous of or hold a grudge against just as they did in the Gospel reading today. I believe Jeremiah sets a great example of what we should do instead of projecting our negative feelings towards others. Like Jeremiah, we should invite God closer into our lives as he will stand at our side in times of turmoil. We must remember God loves and supports us unconditionally.

Anthony Kuceba, Olin ‘26

Reminder: day of abstinence from meat

March 23rd

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

In today's first reading, God declares that he will bring the children of a split Israel back together, into one nation, under one prince. "I will deliver them from all their sins of apostasy, and cleanse them so that they may be my people and I may be their God." God desires us, he deeply wants us to turn to him and devote our lives to him. While this passage from Ezekiel speaks of events and people of his time, his words can also be attributed to our future, the Last Judgment. Jesus is our one prince, the Prince of Peace, and on the last day, he will bring all people of the world together. He will "take the children of Israel from among the nations," and make of us one nation- God's Heavenly Kingdom.

Just as Jesus was persecuted for his teachings, so will we face challenges regarding our faith. Others may mock us, ridicule us, ostracize us, just as Jesus was mocked, ridiculed, and ostracized. They may plot to tear us down, just as the Sanhedrin plotted to kill Jesus in today's Gospel. But knowing that God's Heavenly Kingdom is to come, we have nothing to fear. Everything that you do, do it for God. Face the challenges in this world with Jesus as your sword. Pray, fast, give alms, and glorify God through your words and actions. If you do this, know that on the last day you will be with Him in His Heavenly Kingdom.

Vyto Staniskis, McKelvey '24

HOLY WEEK

March 24th - Palm Sunday

Processional Gospel, Mk 11:1-10

Is 50:4-7

Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

Phil 2:6-11

Mk 14:1—15:47

Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

This line of scripture has long confused me in today's Gospel, Mark 14:1-15:47, which tells of the crucifixion of Jesus. The God I have been raised to worship and grown to love sure wouldn't forsake (or turn away from) anyone, much less his own son.

So why would Jesus cry out something seemingly so antithetical to what he taught his entire life?

Well, even in these final minutes of the savior's mortal life, Jesus was a teacher. The Mass today helps us realize why, as the responsorial psalm for today's Mass comes from the exact same place Jesus was quoting: Psalm 22.

This Psalm comes from a man suffering from the judgment and hatred of others. They mock him in the streets, they rip off his clothes and cast lots for them, and they pierce his hands and feet as he walks by. Sound familiar?

Even in his final hours, Jesus is still teaching. Jesus is still quoting scripture, and while we don't get to hear Jesus say the penultimate lesson from this psalm (at least not yet), it is more than proven with scripture. At the end of Psalm 22, the speaker knows that God will come and rescue him, giving meaning to his hardships and leading "all ends of the earth" to turn to the Lord. This is what will happen when Jesus will rise on Easter Sunday.

In his final breath, Jesus is once again teaching that even in times of great darkness, God is still there, and God will bring the light.

Sam Reynolds, Arts & Sciences '26

March 25th

Is 42:1-7
Ps 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14
Jn 12:1-11

As a response to God's devotion and sacrifice for us, we proclaim, "The Lord is my light and my salvation."

As I listen and read aloud this verse, I reflect on all the things in my life that I have called upon the word of God to guide me through. I believe that no matter the circumstances, there is always an answer, though we may not at once hear it or know it, God has a way of showing us in his own way. This gospel, especially, teaches about the unconditional and nonjudgement love of God. The first reading speaks on the ways that he has created us in his image, to bring forth love and light from a world filled with darkness. We are called to be a beacon for those that seek out his wisdom and comfort. There may be obstacles, such as in the reading, those that seek to divide God's people from his teachings in fear of their power being overthrown. This kind of selfishness is what God commands for us to get rid of, that we may become servants, not only to him to be servants to each other, to serve on another with the love that he has shown us. I love this reading and the more I read it over and over, the more I begin to realize the everlasting effect of his words. I begin to understand my purpose and how I can live my life everyday hearing, and putting these teachings into action, one day at a time. So with this reading, I invite you all to reflect and make connections with what the gospel says and how you live your life fulfilling God's work and sharing his love and compassion with the world.

Bu Meh, Arts & Sciences '26

March 26th

Is 49:1-6
Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17
Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

I find an increasing anticipation with each day of Holy Week, as we approach the Triduum and the Great Feast of Easter. I try to slow down and meditate, however, on the position of the disciples during the time immediately before and during the Passion. Jesus was telling them clearly what was about to happen to him, and had explained the events of the Passion to them many times previously throughout his ministry. Yet there was still doubt and disbelief among the disciples about this reality. I can only imagine the fear and anxiety the disciples would have felt as the events of the Passion began to unfold.

Despite this foretelling the disciples still proceeded to fall asleep in the garden of gethsemane, deny Jesus, and run into hiding while Jesus was persecuted. And yet, they were the foundation upon which our Church was built. Jesus loved them, and loves us, wholly alongside these realities. He yearns for relationship with us. How can we learn from the disciples' reactions during this time to grow deeper in our relationship with God?

As we approach the Triduum, pause to think about how you can stay awake with Him in the garden. But also pause to listen to how Jesus is trying to speak to you and love you in this moment. The events about to occur in the Triduum were for you. Even if you were the only being on the Earth, Jesus still would have died for you that your sins may be forgiven, and you may join Him in Heaven.

Dante Nicotera, School of Medicine '26

March 27th

Is 50:4-9a
Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31 and 33-34
Mt 26:14-25

Today marks a pivotal moment in our faith. Spy Wednesday, as this day is sometimes called, is the spark that will set the Crucifixion in action. The Gospel takes us through the plans that Judas will carry out for essentially a couple hundred dollars, the modern equivalent of thirty pieces of silver. We all know the story behind Judas's decision, as it is one of the most well-known Gospel stories by those with and without faith. As we prepare to enter into the Triduum, we should remember how God can use our faults and missteps for good.

At this point in Lent, many of us may have fallen off the promises that we made way back in February. We may have let hunger or negligence get the best of us on those Fridays where we fast and abstain from meat. We may not have served and given to those in need as much as we'd hope to. We may feel defeated and down on ourselves for yet again succumbing to our human faults, but Jesus can make a way. A good start is that hopefully none of us are conspiring to assist in murder.

One thing that today's gospel can remind us of is how God can take our faults and missteps to show us His glory. If he can take a kiss on the cheek to save all of salvation, imagine what he can do with the times when we fall short.

We have almost made it through the desert! Continue to strive to be more like God for the rest of the week and onwards. We will one day see how God has worked in our lives with our strengths and faults to change us from sinners into saints.

Siobhan Davenport, Arts & Sciences '25

HIGHLIGHT: Chrism Mass

This Mass is celebrated once a year on the morning of Holy Thursday at the Cathedral in each diocese.

During the Mass, the local bishop will bless the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick, and the oil of chrism (only the bishop may do this blessing).

We use the first for adult catechumens and infants, the second for anointing the sick, and the sacred oil of chrism for baptism, confirmation, the ordination of priests, and the consecration of altars.

In recent years, this Mass has also acknowledged the ministry of priests. It invites them to renew their commitment of service and to receive the prayers and support of the people.

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated at 10 am at the Cathedral Basilica on Holy Thursday here in St. Louis and all are welcome to attend this ancient tradition.

March 28th - Holy Thursday

Ex 12:1-8, 11-14
Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18.
1 Cor 11:23-26
Jn 13:1-15

As I imagine living 2000 years ago, I would be shocked if my good friend Jesus proposed a feet washing night. It shocks me because it differs from other portrayals of messiah type figures. Feet washing was something typically carried out by a wife for a husband or by a servant for a master. Here Jesus is showing some femininity, servitude, not traits we expect from the conquering king of this world. Jesus is also physically touching and cleaning the dirtiest part of the person (these are sandal wearing people). Part of me would expect Jesus to be clean and untouchable, some higher, philosophical entity who encourages forsaking the body to emphasize its worthless nature in the next life. We often imagine a messiah who fixes this world totally and completely through blessings of plenty, conquering, magic, whatever (also with very clear commandments not all these paradoxes and mysteries). Why, then, does a seemingly unremarkable carpenter's life and death embody/incarnate divine intervention?

I think God does this to remind us that true salvation is not in this physical world but in the next. Like in the first reading we must live this world as if in flight with our sandals on our feet, staff in one hand and our next bite of food in the other. Knowing any day may be our last liberates us to love radically, it devalues whatever expectations or attachments have prevented us from loving and lets us do what's most important. I imagine I would be equally shocked if my guy friends all got together and painted each other's nails... but perhaps we should, at least once before we all turn into dust and worms again.

Leo Penny, McKelvey '27

March 29th - Good Friday

Is 52:13—53:12
Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25
Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9
Jn 18:1—19:42

"Mount Calvary is the mount of lovers", wrote St. Francis de Sales. Today marks the culmination of that epic love story which was Our Lord's life on earth: greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13). For forty-some days we have been striving to imitate this "dying to self" in our Lenten mortifications, to ingrain in our hearts more deeply the truth that "Love is sacrifice, and sacrifice for Love's sake is a joy" (St. Josemaria, Forge 504).

In all likelihood, we will not experience in our lives anything like the public humiliation and extreme physical suffering that Our Lord endured out of Love for us on Calvary. But our daily life and work provide innumerable opportunities to overcome ourselves in small but heroic ways, "putting to death" our own whims and preferences to better love and serve those around us. With the eyes of faith we can discover God's will for us manifested in the little crosses of each day, in the duty of each moment.

Thanks to Jesus' sacrifice, accomplished on Good Friday and re-presented every day at Holy Mass, we can unite all our sacrifices to His, making them truly pleasing to God. If we embrace the Cross, our whole day can become a Mass - an offering of ourselves in the Son, to the Father, with the Spirit - and we can become co-redeemers with Him.

Justin Sanchez, School of Medicine '25

Reminder: day of fasting and abstinence from meat

March 30th - Holy Saturday

Gn 1:1—2:2
Gn 22:1-18
Ex 14:15—15:1
Is 54:5-14
Is 55:1-11
Bar 3:9-15, 32--4:4
Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28
Rom 6:3-11
Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Mark 16:1-7

Life is full of in-betweens. Transitioning jobs, apartments, relationships and semesters, becoming a parent, grandparent or empty nester, and retiring all demonstrate passing from one earthly reality to another. Similarly, the space between the Red Sea created a path for the Israelites to transition. From nothing to everything in creation, scripture clearly depicts evident shifts between realities.

Holy Saturday offers us that space to anticipate, process, and prepare for the ultimate change in reality from death on the cross to the resurrection. Like the parting of the Red Sea, the Holy Spirit wants to breathe a space of life into our hearts.

Likewise, building fires requires just as much attention to the spaces in-between as to the wood. On this holy day let us therefore allow ourselves to trust and embrace the spaces in-between the logs that shape the fire, created by God's light working through us, of our lives. When navigating the constant change that comprises our earthly realities, I invite you to root yourself, with confidence, in the freedom of your identity in Christ. Just as His children are buried with Him through baptism into death, we too will be raised from the dead.

So, let us seek that freedom in the stillness of the breathing space that is Holy Saturday. While the time in the tomb often feels unending, we are called to remember although His coming is never what we expect, it will never disappoint.

Jenna Calabrese, School of Medicine '25

March 31st - Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8
Jn 20:1-9

He is risen: this is not a conclusion but an elevation to a new beginning. Let our hearts resound with celebration and be invited to a new dimension of joy.

Jesus' resurrection takes center stage, victorious over death, and a solid confirmation of God's everlasting promises. Leading up to this moment, we were devoted this Lent to undergo a transformation in ourselves to be ready for this profound truth. This is our rallying cry for unshakeable faith, even in the face of uncertainties and moments of fear. The messages from the readings resonate this theme powerfully by calling for a redirect in our focus from the earthly to a higher perspective, an emphasis on togetherness and God's inclusivity, the example of the disciples' journey from confusion to understanding, mirroring the call for confidence in our Lord.

The empty tomb isn't a mystery; it's a declaration that belief can move mountains. After seeing it, the disciples used their bolstered faith to spread the Good News of our risen One. Let us be reminded to do the same together as we shout "Hallelujah!" from our hearts.

Christine Muoghalu, Arts & Sciences '25

**He Is Risen!
Go and Be His Loving Presence In The World**