

## Lenten Reflection Booklet - 2019



photo from the 2019 Agape El Salvador Service Immersion trip

I have come to call **not the righteous but sinners** to repentance.

LUKE 5:32

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## Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday 3/6

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Mass: 12:05pm, Medical Campus, King Center, 7th Floor Becker Library.  
Ecumenical Ashes Service: 12:15pm, CSC chapel  
Mass: 5:30pm, CSC Chapel

Palm Sunday 4/14

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Mass: 11am & 9pm, CSC Chapel

Holy Thursday 4/18

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Mass: 7pm, CSC Chapel  
Adoration afterwards until midnight

Good Friday 4/19

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Service: 7pm, CSC Chapel

Easter Vigil 4/20

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

Easter 4/21

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Mass: 9:30am & 11:30am, Graham Chapel

## Weekly Ongoing Events

### SUNDAYS:

Mass: 11am & 9pm, CSC Chapel (no 9pm on 3/10)

### MONDAYS:

Med School Office Hours: 11:30am-2pm, Check weekly email for special events!

### TUESDAYS

DUC Lunch: 11am-1pm

Mass and soup: 5:15pm except 3/12, CSC living room

RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults: 7-8:30pm CSC Social Hall

### WEDNESDAYS

Med School Office Hours: 12:30pm-1:30pm

Holy Hour on Med Campus: 12pm-12:30pm

Adoration & Stations of the Cross (except 3/13 & 4/17): 8pm-9pm

### THURSDAYS

DUC Lunch: 11am-1pm

### FRIDAYS:

Mass and soup: 12:05pm, CSC Chapel (except 3/8 & 4/19)

## Special Events

### LGBTQ+ SOUL

3/18, 4/1, 4/15 6:15pm-8pm, CSC Living Room

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

3/22, 3pm

### CONFESSION MARATHON

3/26 2pm-midnight

### IGNITE ADORATION

3/27, 8-9:30pm

### GRAD STUDENT / YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

3/30

### IMMERSION UNDERGRAD RETREAT

4/5 - 4/6

### ALUMNI HAPPY HOUR

4/12, 4:30-6pm

### GRAD STUDENT/YOUNG ADULT HAPPY HOUR

4/12, 5:30-7:30pm

**CATHOLIC STUDENT UNION:** For guidance on leading student initiatives, reach out to your elected peer leaders on the CSU Executive Board at [csu@washucsc.org](mailto:csu@washucsc.org).

**GRATIA PLENA:** If you'd like to get involved with the CSC's undergraduate women's group, email Ingrid Herrenbruck at [imherrenbruck@wustl.edu](mailto:imherrenbruck@wustl.edu) or come hang out with us each Friday from 4-6pm in the CSC Living Room (unless otherwise noted).

**CHOIR:** If you want to get involved, feel free to email Joe Schoen at [schoen@washucsc.org](mailto:schoen@washucsc.org) or Bryan Beams for 9pm choir at [beams@washucsc.org](mailto:beams@washucsc.org)

## A Note from the Director of Ministry

“Rebuild my Church.”

These are the words St. Francis heard God speaking to him as prayed in front of the cross at St. Damiano (**Prayer**). The manner in which he was to “rebuild the Church” was revealed to him as he reflected on the disciples going out and greeting others with peace in the Gospel of Matthew (**Almsgiving**). St. Francis heard the call to “rend your hearts” and his garments (**Fasting**). As the abuse scandals have demonstrated all too painfully, our Church, much as in the day of St. Francis, is in need of being rebuilt. Who will do it? Church leaders? A modern day St. Francis? If only it were that easy that someone else would do it. It is up to YOU and ME.

It is too big of a job for any one person. True. However, I propose to you this Lent to consider the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as ways to help rebuild our Church.

**Prayer:** When your family is experiencing a crisis you ask the question of “how can I help my family?” The Body of Christ is hurting. I’d propose to you this Lent to spend time prayerfully considering how the suffering of the faithful within the Church is effecting you. How is God calling you to bring healing to the Body of Christ? **REBUILD MY CHURCH AS HEALER.**

**Fasting:** Life is busy, full of commitments, exams, class, work, relationships, the list can go on. Faced with such great problems in our Church and in our world, it can be easy for any of us to say, “I’m too busy – it’s someone else’s job.” Or maybe even easier still, to despair and become apathetic. Lent says “WAKE UP!” Wake up to the pain of the world, to our Church. Remove the things in your life that keep you from seeing the pain. Because when you see the pain it will spur action. I’d propose to you this Lent to find one or two things that you can remove from your life that “shelter” you from having to act and create change in

our Church. Maybe start by fasting from excuses of “I’m too busy” or “I don’t know how” when it comes to transforming our Church.

**REBUILD MY CHURCH WITH COURAGE.**

**Almsgiving:** In a time when inspiring leadership is lacking in our church it is not too sensational to see the Church as in great poverty. The Body of Christ is hurting. Likely, as a part of the Body of Christ, you may be hurting. Yet, we are called to sacrifice for the sake of others, especially those in poverty. I’d propose to you this Lent to consider how you can inspire change in our Church as a way of almsgiving. How can you give of your talents to the Body of Christ in ways you may have in the secular world that the Church could benefit so greatly from.

**REBUILD MY CHURCH AS A LEADER.**

**TROY WOYTEK, DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY**

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## Online Resources

United States Catholic Conference of Bishops

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

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

Creighton University Spirituality Resources:

[http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/Collaborative  
Ministry/Lent/](http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/)

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

Dynamic Catholic- Best Lent Ever:

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

Word on Fire, Bishop Barron:

<https://www.lentreflections.com/>

## Introduction to the Booklet

This reflection booklet is made up of reflections written by students to guide you each day in thoughtful meditation on the daily readings. Readings can be found online at [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).

As a student myself & a representative of the student body, I am excited to present to you these reflections. This booklet is marked by Christ's body, alive here among us. Each of our imperfect voices collected make up the perfect voice of God, speaking peace and truth into the world.

This Lent, find out who Jesus is calling you to be. Every day, let the Scriptures teach, console, and challenge you. Find where God is speaking to you in new & surprising ways as you go to prayer. Allow these holy thoughts of our students, compiled in this booklet, to walk with you in the journey to Christ's will for you.

"I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."

He is calling you this Lent. Do not be afraid to walk into the desert with Jesus.

INGRID HERRENBRUCK, 2018 CSU SPIRITUAL CHAIR

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## March 6<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday

There is one part in today's readings that particularly stands out to me:

For gracious and merciful is he,  
slow to anger, rich in kindness,  
and relenting in punishment.

This description of God invokes an image which I hold dear and which gives me comfort - the image of a patient and forgiving God. With this image in mind, our example of how we should live our lives is set forth. We are called to live graciously and mercifully which includes being patient, kind, and forgiving like our God. It's one thing to acknowledge this teaching and a completely different thing to put these teachings into action. It's easy to become hot-headed and vengeful when things in life don't seem to be looking upward and your surrounded by negative news, energy, events, etc. However, we must remember that even in times of great struggle, in fact, especially in times of great struggle, it is important to keep this image of God in mind and try, no matter how hard it may be, to be a reflection of this perfect image in a less than perfect world.

ALEXIS PINZON, ARTS & SCIENCES '20

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Reminder: day of fasting & abstinence

March 7<sup>th</sup>

Decision is defined as a conclusion reached after a process of consideration. It is estimated that the average human makes 35,000 conscious decisions every day. This is a lot of choices to be made that influence what happens in our daily lives. With more opportunities for decision-making, we are left with an increased ability to make a “wrong” decision. How do we know what constitutes a right or wrong, good or bad decision? We know that a decision is the result of contemplation, but what does that look like?

Today’s readings answer just that. Selflessness is the key to right or good decision-making. It is easy to make a decision based on our individual needs, but today’s readings push us to not settle with easy. By choosing selflessness, we are serving God and others that surround us, which in turn reciprocates into a mutual benefit for all. As we begin this Lenten season, let us be mindful to choose selflessness in our everyday lives to further experience God’s good graces and better ourselves as God’s children.

MAGGIE FLEITA, OT PROGRAM '20

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March 8<sup>th</sup>

During Lent, we don't give up meat on Fridays because meat is bad. Rather we do it as a way of mourning and remembering what we are preparing for liturgically. It is a physical reminder of what Jesus did for us. Sure, it is easy to remember that Jesus died for our sins, but it is just as easy to just have our busy lives take over and forget what He did.

Just as our reasons for fasting are important, so too is not fasting at other times. Jesus says that it would not make sense for the guests to mourn while the bridegroom is still at the wedding. Fasting is practiced during our time of mourning and it makes our time of rejoicing that much more important. Jesus is teaching us that it is important to rejoice and celebrate in good times. During this long Lenten time we can often get caught up in the mourning. It's important to remember that we are working towards a time of rejoicing.

BENJAMIN GAFFNEY, ENGINEERING '20

### 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 holy days of obligation similar to the Sabbath
5. Observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence
6. Provide to the material needs of the Church to your ability

During the Lenten season, we have special emphasis on the 5<sup>th</sup> precept, fasting on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday and abstaining from meat every Friday.

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March 9<sup>th</sup>

In today's Gospel, Jesus calls us to view our relationship with Him from a slightly different lens. It is easy for us to think that because we have professed Christ as our savior and the center of our lives, we have transitioned from students to teachers. The truth, however, is that these two roles are not independent of one another. Rather, they are intertwined, and one cannot exist without the other. To be disciples, we must remember that leaders are not masters, but life-long learners aware that there is a world of knowledge they have yet to acquire.

Today's scripture calls us to remember that one of the reasons we have a relationship with Christ is because we need healing and development as His children. To heal, we must become life-long learners and approach him with humility. Jesus is calling us to leave our pride at the door and see ourselves for what we truly are – imperfect humans in need of Him. If we were perfect and mastered what it means to live in Christ's image, we wouldn't need Him as our physician. So, we must surrender ourselves to Him and acknowledge that He alone has the power to lead us through this journey. Today, let us pray that we will approach our call to discipleship and healing with humility so that we may "delight in the Lord and... ride on the heights of the earth" (Is. 58:9B-14).

EKA JOSE, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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## March 10<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday of Lent

It is no accident that before Jesus began his public ministry he had to physically and spiritually prepare himself. Withdrawing to the silence of the desert, he disciplined himself.

As an undergraduate student navigating through a wilderness of responsibilities, I often find myself wondering whether my efforts will really pay off in the end. Sometimes, like Jesus, in order to ready myself for the next exam, I have to withdraw from the distractions of the world, give up activities I love for a time. I often find myself tempted to search for an easier way.

Yet, there is no fast track to success. Jesus recognizes this, despite the devil's persuasions. He holds out until end, anticipating a less immediate, but ultimately more substantial recompense. We are called to do the same in order to be reunited at the end with our Heavenly Father.

We cannot enjoy the fruits of our labor without the labor. We cannot make bread from stone. We need the right ingredients—water, flour, yeast. As a student, I must keep up with my classes. That takes responsibility. I must hold myself accountable for my actions, and, just as Jesus refused to leap off the parapet, resist the urge to cast my cares to the wind and let others step in to save me.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let us turn away from the trials of the present and look forward to the fulfillment of Easter, recalling that we don't need to make bread alone. Jesus gives himself as bread to us every Mass.

AMANDA ARBUCKLE, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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March 11<sup>th</sup>

In the past, I have read this passage like a checklist – feed, clothe, and give to those in need. Jesus asks us to serve the poor, marginalized, and persecuted, right? Of course!

I invite you to read this Gospel focusing on how you treat the impoverished as well as the affluent. How you treat the persecuted and those in power. How you treat the sick and those more talented than you. How you treat the stranger and your best friend.

It is easy for us to give what we have to those who are obviously lacking. Many have probably given a sandwich to a hungry woman, a blanket to a cold man, or a smile to a depressed friend. Do we give our talents, time, smile, and love to all of those around us? Or just those on the margins or in need? Jesus is not providing us with a checklist, but instead invites us to choose how we treat every human being in each interaction we're blessed to have. These choices, I believe, define who we are. Who are you right now? Who will you become?

EVAN NAGEL, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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March 12<sup>th</sup>

To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. Throughout today's scriptures, God focuses on the power of forgiveness. God has showered us with love through his word and deed, and He has given us the opportunity to forgive. For me, forgiveness is always difficult to show towards others. However, just as God rescues us in our own times of trouble and distress, we too must support our neighbors even if they have wronged us.

Why is it crucial to forgive one another? In today's gospel, the Our Father includes this line, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," and continues to say, "If you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions." Forgiving our neighbors allows us to receive forgiveness from God. This love from God is unconditional, and this Lenten season I believe that it is important to focus on the power of forgiveness, both with others and with God.

ERIN FLYNN, ENGINEERING '22

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## March 13<sup>th</sup>

The scriptures tell me to keep faith in God no matter the consequences. God is forgiving, and anyone can ask for forgiveness. In the verse before the Gospel we are told,

“Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart for I am gracious and merciful.”

Through this we are shown that we should follow God’s example and strive to be better. This means not only improving in order to not ask for forgiveness as often, but also to forgive others.

The Responsorial Psalm speaks to having a “contrite and humbled” heart. I believe that humility is another virtue we can work on. Through humility comes character, which we can take and implement in our everyday life. If we are able to connect with others by all displaying forgiveness, humility, and love, just as God tells us, we will be able to better ourselves in all areas: mind, body, and soul.

At the end of the day we should be able to leave this earth knowing that we have followed the Word of God. God provides us a great opportunity during Lent to focus on bettering ourselves in these areas, and hopefully we will answer His calling.

MARC VANDENBERG, ENGINEERING '19

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March 14<sup>th</sup>

In the Gospel today (Matthew 7:7-12), Jesus talks to his disciples about the power of prayer and the goodness of the Lord. This passage has come to be particularly powerful for me as my faith developed during my years at WashU. I used to take this passage much more at face value than I do today – truly believing that I could ask anything of God and He could grant it to me, like making a wish at 11:11.

Now, every time I hear this reading, I am reminded that God does not always answer our prayers in the way we expect. But He will always answer them, for He knows us better than we know ourselves and will answer our prayers in the way that best serves us. At first, it may seem like God is handing us a stone when we asked for a loaf of bread. In time we will realize that everything happens for a reason and that God did, in fact, give us the best loaf of bread we could have asked for.

God is always here for us and will do whatever He can to help us on our journey back to Him in His Kingdom. All we have to do is ask and God will answer.

JAY SCHROEDER, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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March 15<sup>th</sup>

Forget medical or law school, consulting or investment banking firms, the Gospel today reminds us admission to The Kingdom of Heaven requires the most rigorous of evaluation processes. Instead of resumes and personal statements, our ticket to admission rests on the content of our life's work. As daunting as that seems, the authenticity brings me solace.

Business professional garb or high achieving test scores are irrelevant when it comes to the amount of hearts we've touched and quality of our spirit. Simply stated, we need to walk the walk for admission to the Pearly Gates.

More than that though, Jesus encourages us to forgive. Forgive relentlessly. Forgive until every last penny of reconciliation is paid. As we've all experienced, forgiveness is tough! Forgiveness means swallowing our ego and recognizing the imperfections of our brothers, sisters, and ourselves. Once we do this, we recognize the humble beauty in humanity, and bring a speck of holy essence down to Earth.

CAROLINE DEMPSEY, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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Reminder: day of abstinence

March 16<sup>th</sup>

Today's reading is something that is relevant in current life: love your enemies, love even those who persecute you. Interestingly it opens up with the reading of Moses proclaiming that all must follow the Lord's decree/commandments (rules if you will) so that they may be raised up to glory. Then in the Gospel, Jesus essentially says "Well yeah you should still follow these rules, but you got some of them wrong. You should not only love your neighbor, but your enemy as well, and those who persecute you."

My first response: Oof. Well that's a big ol' reminder."

It is hard to get past your initial negative emotions around an enemy/persecutor (I can't imagine someone's first reaction to their persecutor is one filled with warm rainbows and butterfly hugs); but it is also scary. Whether it's the fear of rejection or the frustration of not receiving love back, there are many ways that loving can go wrong. Love requires a specific level of vulnerability and, when put in the wrong hands, can be painful. At the same time though, Jesus is trying to comfort us. When he asks "For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?" he is saying that we will get much more out of expanding our love to others.

So, after this reading I've set the intention (and challenge you) to go out and express an act of love or kindness that you wouldn't normally do. Try to push boundaries and extend an act of love to those around you; then see what fruits it will bring.

EMILY ALBERTINA, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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## March 17<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday of Lent

I have always been fascinated by the story of the Transfiguration, especially when I think about what the experience must have been like for Jesus. While he is eternal and would have known Moses and Elijah spiritually since their conceptions, this instance on the mountain could be their first physical encounter since Jesus became man. These prophets, two of God's most devoted servants, are the friends that Jesus goes to in prayer, and for the first time, he meets them physically face to face. What must that have been like for Him?

In addition, it fascinates me that Jesus chooses Moses and Elijah, two human men, to call upon for support and strength for the trial to come. He has his disciples, but they do not quite understand the enormity of what he is about to undertake. He looks for advice and intercession from individuals who have faced similar earthly struggles. How honoring that Jesus deems Moses and Elijah worthy enough to advise him about his plan of salvation, and how much we can learn from this action. In the same way that Jesus goes to Moses and Elijah for support and advice, we similarly can go to the Saints, humans who have experienced similar earthly struggles and know best how to support us.

While reflecting on this passage today, I encourage you to place yourself the disciples' shoes. As a spectator of this wondrous scene, what can we learn about Jesus from his encounter with Moses and Elijah? What must that experience have been like for Jesus? And how can we obey the Lord's command at the end of the passage, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

CELIA KENNEDY, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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March 18<sup>th</sup>

College writing instructors are right – we should avoid the passive voice.

One might say: “I am loved” or “I am condemned.” In both cases, the speaker focuses on their own state, leaving out the subject of the sentence. In today’s Gospel, Jesus comments on such thinking. He says: “Stop condemning and you will not be condemned.” Jesus speaks to our fears of being judged or condemned, only to remind us that if somebody is feeling condemned or judged it’s because we judge them, and vice versa. Judgment, condemnation, evil – these do not ‘befall us.’ Somebody does these things to us and often through our will and actions, these things keep happening.

The same logic applies to forgiveness. Too often do we hear that we are forgiven because we are loved. It is not factually incorrect to say so but if we get used to thinking in the passive voice, we might come to believe that forgiveness of our own sins is within ourselves. Living in an individualistic culture that conceives of us as independent beings with freedom of choice, it’s good to look at today’s first reading and psalm.

Both remind us that we best exercise our freedom of choice in relationships with God and other humans. We choose to ask for forgiveness. Someone else responds, choosing to forgive us. The state of being loved is a result of both, our will and someone’s will towards us. It is will that we may have trouble finding, will for which we should pray and for which we should be thankful.

TOMEK CEBRAT, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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## March 19<sup>th</sup> – Solemnity of St. Joseph

What great faith Joseph had! To not understand, but still follow, to be worried, but still obey. As Joseph accepted his role in God's plan with humility and was faithfully obedient to God, so too did God humble himself to be obedient to his creation and keep his promises to us.

But why would the child Jesus worry his parents, who are also beloved children of God? Mary and Joseph, though given the incredible gift of intimacy with the child Jesus, endured the anxiety of distance from him, of losing him, of searching for him. They know what it is like to be confused and not understand God's will, to wonder what will come of his promises. They too ask Jesus, "Why have you done this to us?" just as we so often do when we experience pain and loss.

God is a mystery even to those most close to his heart.

In our confusion and anxiety, when he allows us to struggle, God gives us the opportunity to draw closer to him, to surrender ourselves faithfully to his fatherly love; for Jesus, too, knew the deep care of a father.

During this Lenten season, let us consider how we can unite our hearts with the purity of love that St. Joseph embodies, a love that allows itself to be amazed, longs to be close to the Lord and His will, trusts without understanding, and reminds us that we are cared for as beloved children of our Heavenly Father.

MARIA SCHMEER, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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March 20<sup>th</sup>

As we witness a culture that promotes a prideful justification of grudges and revenge, we turn to God to remind us of the existence of mercy. Today's readings depict mercy in different, yet unified, instances.

When Jeremiah explains to God that he does not wish evil upon those who have wronged him, God and Jeremiah call us to reflect on our attitudes about the wrongdoings against us. Any sort of emotional pain inflicted by another human being, ranging from a quick jab at our insecurities to a massively hurtful betrayal, still deserves a merciful approach in dialogue. This does not mean that we cannot defend ourselves in times of criticism, but it does mean that we must resist the toxicity of wishing evil upon those who have hurt us. God calls us to recognize their humanity and wish them healthy changes towards goodness.

After we realize the importance of mercy directed at others, we must live with the knowledge that we also have our own connection to God that allows us to become enveloped in His mercy. Matthew's Gospel reminds us that the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give His life. God's mercy is infinitely stronger than any mercy that we can show to any person. We lean on God's mercy to receive His forgiveness and to forgive ourselves for the moments that have caused us to dwell ceaselessly. This Lent, spend some time thinking about how to increase your awareness of unique moments of mercy.

KRISTEN RITCHIE, STLCOP '23

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March 21<sup>st</sup>

In today's Gospel we hear about the story of a rich man who lived in luxury while Lazarus, a poor man, lay hungry and sick outside his door.

At first pass, this parable's message seems fairly straightforward: don't be greedy and share openly with the poor. So I give my money at Mass, I volunteer – I'm all good, right? Well, yes and no. It is certainly good to give to others, but there's more to it than that.

In the passage, Lazarus depends upon others. He is given a name, unlike the rich man, which signifies his importance to Jesus; however, he is talked about in the third person, does not say anything, and does not do anything.

The rich man did not reject Lazarus when he sought aid. He failed to recognize Lazarus's existence, even though he was right there on his doorstep. The rich man lived in his own bubble. He was self-consumed and ignored the world around him. He failed to help those who are voiceless and depend on advocates for help.

What ways are you self-consumed? Who is voiceless and in need of your advocacy? In what ways are you ignoring God and instead living in your own bubble? What changes can you make to live more consciously, aware of the world around you?

TOMMY BAUMEL, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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March 22<sup>nd</sup>

Have you ever stopped to think why is it that we sometimes reject Jesus or those trying to bring us closer to Him? This rejection is often not explicit, and we don't even realize we are doing it.

Today's first reading, the story of Joseph and his brothers, shows us how tempting it is for us to let jealousy and selfishness take over our hearts and influence our actions. We fall into the trap of comparing ourselves to others, focusing on what they have or who they are, instead of realizing the blessings God has given us and taking advantage of those gifts we have received. When we realize we don't have to win God's love, for He already loves us infinitely, we are able to live joy filled and confident lives. We can let go of the material things and focus on our faith and relationships.

Just like the Gospel reading of today, God has given us many talents and has asked us to do good with them. Many times, we want to take the easy way out. We want the profit but don't want to work hard for it. That's when we reject God and His ways. Fortunately, He loves us so much, that he will never give up on us. No matter how many times we reject Him or those He puts in our lives, He will always come back and wait for us open the door of our hearts and our minds.

God is all-loving and all-powerful. If we make the decision every day to try to center our lives around Him and put our trust in Him, we will start to see His workings in our everyday lives.

MARIA RIVERO, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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Reminder: day of abstinence

LENT 2019 |

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March 23<sup>rd</sup>

During this great season of introspection, I find myself examining the ways in which I have made mistakes and fallen from God's grace. Today's gospel, the story of the prodigal son, particularly resonates with me because it reveals the ways in which we are loved by God for who we are, who we are not, and who we are yet to become.

It is easy to see ourselves in the shoes of both sons at different points of our lives. Sometimes we can resonate with the "good" son, constantly following the rules, praising God, and doing what is right. But other times the crosses we bear become too much to handle and we fall, getting entangled in certain vices, like the prodigal son.

I think that the best parts of my life come after a great fall because, when I gather up the courage to get back up, there God is, waiting to celebrate my triumph like a father welcoming home his lost child. My faith would be a fraction of what it is today without the hardships I have faced in my life. How truly wonderful is it to see that, even at your lowest, there is someone there to pick you back up and love you unconditionally for every imperfection and every flaw.

IRENE HAMLIN, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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## March 24<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday of Lent

What does it mean to repent? In both the second reading and the Gospel today, this oftentimes uncomfortable topic is raised. Combined, these readings serve as an important reminder of two key aspects in accepting and repenting of our sins.

First, in order to achieve forgiveness and closure, we must first admit what we have done and genuinely repent. It's often easier to pretend that a problem does not exist rather than face it head on. However, doing so provides no resolution to the emotional and moral turmoil that these conflicts can bring. It is only through acceptance of our faults and righting any wrongs that we can move forward to strengthen our relationship with God and with others.

Second, we are reminded that everyone has reasons to repent. When Jesus speaks, he makes it clear that those who have suffered for their sins are no worse than the community at large. For this reason, we must always be conscious of our negative words and actions but can also take solace in that we are not alone. Our family, friends, and neighbors all have the same work to do in seeking forgiveness and grace.

Keeping these teachings in mind, let us move forward through the rest of this Lenten season being conscious of our sins and striving as best we can to show true repentance.

ADAM HEMAUER, ARTS & SCIENCES '20

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## March 25<sup>th</sup> – Solemnity of the Annunciation

“Behold, I come to do Your will.”

Behold, I am scared shitless, I have no idea how this is supposed to happen, and all I do know is that this is not going to be easy. Sound familiar? Whether it’s a difficult conversation, a vague task, or a daunting decision, uncertainty is often the largest obstacle to progress, especially when driven by fear. Fear of making someone close to you upset, of making mistakes and having to start over again, of not getting exactly what you thought you wanted, or of actually getting exactly what you thought you wanted. The Fear of Uncertainty—of not knowing exactly how and when and why—can be paralyzing. It means you must relinquish a certain level of control over your life.

“How can this be...?!?!” Mary exclaimed when the angel told her all about God’s miraculous plan for her and Jesus. Can you imagine her confusion and fear? Honestly, the real miracle here is the fact that Mary eventually accepted this responsibility, despite all the uncertainty. God could have chosen any way of sending Jesus to dwell among us, but he chose to work with and through Mary. And she chose to trust in this relationship.

“Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.” Ten very simple words that, when combined, explain how God asks us to live each of our lives. Neither in fear or complete certainty, but through trust in the comfort that only God can provide. We are never actually alone, no matter how hard we try. His name is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us,” always.

KRISTIE HOUGHTON, SAM FOX '20

REMINDER: CONFESSION MARATHON TOMORROW

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March 26<sup>th</sup>

*Confession Marathon today, 2pm-midnight at the CSC*

“Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him.”

Most of us have heard the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant before – in Mass, Sunday school, children’s books – and so had I. Most of us have visualized the servant and his debtor as different people. After all, how could someone owe money to their own bank account? Yet, consider that we are also our own masters, and we ought to forgive ourselves our own debts the same way that God does.

How often do we criticize ourselves for not working hard enough in our classes, even if we did our best? How many times do we scold ourselves for oversleeping the alarm, even if we needed the rest? How frequently do we walk away from dessert chastising ourselves for eating that third cookie, even if they’re part of a balanced diet?

Being late, forgetting a birthday, losing an assignment, saying “no” to another commitment, choosing a major your parents didn’t expect, spending too much money, not spending enough time with a friend, taking too many classes, not taking enough classes, the list goes on.

Like the debtor in today’s Gospel, we have plenty to imprison ourselves for. Like him, we are human. We are not perfect. But God forgives those imperfections. He loves them. So can we.

MARIA HYRC, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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LENT 2019 |

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March 27<sup>th</sup>

Notice the emphasis both Jesus and Moses put on how we influence others by living according to the Commandments. Both remind their respective audiences that our lives, and specifically the following of God's will, do not occur in a vacuum; instead, we must play an active role.

Moses reminds the people that by following God "thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations." Jesus says that breaking the commandments may have consequences, but so does teaching others to do so. Both Moses and Jesus mention teaching, as the passages remind us that human are meant to play an active role in spreading God's message.

Moses mentions that other nations would take notice of a people following the law God has set before them, which is leading by example, but also that directly teaching future generations is important. God's message is powerful, but only as powerful as we allow it to be by following it closely and encouraging others to do so. Teaching others to follow the commandments is something we are called to do directly.

Another thing that sticks out is the individuality that Moses mentions towards the end. We are given decrees, but must be acutely aware of the things going on around us as well.

LUIS PEREZ, GRADUATE STUDENT '19

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March 28<sup>th</sup>

My dear brothers and sisters, we have arrived here today approximately half way through out Lenten journey of 2019.

Today we read from the prophet Jeremiah that a failure to listen to the Lord took place among the people of Israel. Perhaps this may lead us to reflect on how we have stumbled with our own commitments during this season of increased observance. Yet be strong and take heart, for the response is, "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Our God is a God of mercy and the past shall not define our future. This season is not about perfection, but observance. We are to listen to our God speak to us in our hearts through our triumphs and our failures.

In the Gospel, the people were unable to comprehend the power in the righteousness of Christ. In their disbelief they speculate that Christ is casting out demons in the name of demons. However, Christ in all his glory continues to respond with patience, compassion, and mercy, reminding the people that evil does not cast out evil. Christ demonstrates the power of goodness by its ability to conquer darkness.

As we continue to move forward to Easter, we can turn the reality of the first reading around with the Gospel. We remind ourselves that darkness cannot prevail in our lives if we are to commit ourselves in faith to the power of Christ who conquers even death. May this truth bring peace to us as we reflect and give thanks for the most powerful love and mercy of our God.

BR. MICHAEL MARY HILL, O.P.

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March 29<sup>th</sup>

Love with God is a two-way street.

In the first reading, the Lord is promising to “love them freely,” and in the gospel Jesus says,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”

God has blessed us with his love, and we must return that love. So how do we do this? We take the love he has given us and share it with our neighbors. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. If we truly love God, then we also love all our neighbors, for God is all around us. This makes me take a step back.

Who do I show my love to? Who is it that sends me their love? Do I let that love go unnoticed or do I send it back? I am forced to examine my relationships, with God and my neighbors.

In this Lenten season, it is my goal to make sure people can feel the love that flows so freely for the Lord.

JESS KOVACH, ARTS & SCIENCES '19

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Reminder: day of abstinence

LENT 2019 |

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March 30<sup>th</sup>

At a school like WashU, us students are particularly prone to exalting ourselves and thinking we are better than others. We've all achieved some major successes in life, and the school makes sure we don't forget it. We are treated to the best in food, housing, campus amenities, and academic resources.

Just as the Pharisee in the Gospel reading has been placed on a pedestal during his life as a symbol of righteousness, in some ways we students are placed on a pedestal of success. The challenge is to humble ourselves amidst this exaltation.

To be fair, I realize that much of our successes in life are the result of diligence and hard work, but we are also very fortunate to be able to have the opportunities and means to call WashU our home. This doesn't mean we should feel bad for reaping the benefits of our good fortune or be ashamed of our triumphs.

I am proud of my successes, but I also try to be aware that I have double that in failures. I try to remember that other people have sacrificed for me to be able to enjoy my world-class education. I try to keep in mind others in this world that don't have the opportunities that I do, so that I can use this world-class education to pay forward the love that is shown to me.

CARTER RHOLL, ENGINEERING '20

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LENT 2019 |

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## March 31<sup>st</sup> – Fourth Sunday of Lent

In our first reading, the Lord has finished delivering the Israelites from Egypt. After sustaining them for forty years on Manna, He provides them with natural bounty and a land to call their own. After a lifetime, they have arrived at the paradise promised by the Lord. Pray that we may overcome our sins and trials so that the Kingdom of Heaven may await us.

In our second reading, we are called to accept the open arms of the Lord. We, through our years of wandering, have been welcomed back to Providence. Mirroring the way Christ taught us to pray, we are asked to truly meditate over how this new Manna of reconciliation sustains us and gives our lives meaning. Pray that we may fully count the blessings and providences God gives us.

In our Gospel, Christ is explaining through parable the method of our reconciliation. When, after wasting our gifts on material pleasures and the works of Satan, we crawl back to Him asking for forgiveness and our portion of Heaven back. He accepts us with open arms and love. Furthermore, he reminds us of our worth, and assures us that we are no less worthy of His love because of our sin. We need only accept the love He offers in order to enjoy the fruits of His compassion. Pray that we may accept His love and forgive ourselves as He has forgiven us.

Throughout our readings, God grants us infinite gifts and offers us the riches of Heaven. In three different ways, He asks us for the small price of separating ourselves from sin and accepting reconciliation. Pray that we may give up our sins, accept His love and forgiveness, and be fully prepared for the Kingdom of Heaven.

THOMAS FILICE, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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April 1<sup>st</sup>

The readings today invite us to rejoice and to believe “...there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create;” a verse from the first reading states.

Yet, happiness and joy are hard to maintain especially when we go through very difficult moments, like the loss of a beloved one. In moments like these, Jesus invites us to believe. Believe that everything is going to be fine no matter what. Believe that even the longest night comes to an end. Believe that even walls have an end, and they can always be flown over.

Let us not wait for signs and miracles, or even wait for the resurrection, Easter, to start believing and trusting more. Let us start trusting NOW, believing NOW, and rejoicing NOW.

When we rejoice, it's easier to share and give love. It's easier to bring a smile out of the simplest thing that happens to us. When we rejoice, it's easier to give hugs and to have an attentive ear. When we rejoice, it's easier to find and see the good in what looks bad. When we rejoice, we love. We then bring God's nature and presence to our lives and the lives of others. Believing is trusting, trusting is rejoicing, and rejoicing is loving.

Does sharing and giving love have a limit, a time, or a season? Let us then rejoice NOW and always.

DAVID BALMACEA M., PHD '23

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LENT 2019 /

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April 2<sup>nd</sup>

I always begin Lent with good intentions. I plan to pray more often, to treat others better, even to forget that candy and alcohol exist. We're far enough into Lent now that it's likely many of my good intentions have fallen by the wayside. Some of that is my fault. Some of it is just the circumstances of my life. I mean, one year I gave up meat during Lent, but then a friend invited me to a baseball game. Well, how is a person supposed to go to a baseball game without eating a hot dog!?! Really, what chance did I have?

Today Ezekiel reminds us that, in spite of past failures and defeats, God has big plans. Ezekiel was a priest taken into captivity in Babylon. A priest's main job was to offer sacrifice at the Temple in Jerusalem. But the Babylonians destroyed the Temple and took people like Ezekiel to live as captives in a strange land. Today's reading predicts that in spite of Ezekiel's status as a prisoner, new life from a new Temple is coming.

Ezekiel somehow knew the story didn't end in captivity. His vision of a new Temple — even better and more life-giving than the old one — gave Ezekiel and his fellow captives hope, and it gives me hope in the midst of my failures, too.

It's been Lent for weeks. I've vacillated between failures and good intentions. But Ezekiel's vision tells me new life is on the way, new life that doesn't depend on my ability to refrain from chocolate. It's God's gift, and it's freely given. Easter is coming, when new life will flow like an unstoppable river. It'll probably mean more if I prepare through prayer, fasting and almsgiving; but new life is coming — and coming soon — whether we're ready or not.

JIM DRYDEN, CAMPUS MINISTER

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LENT 2019 |

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April 3<sup>rd</sup>

The biggest fears in life are often those which we cannot see. The fear of standing out or being rejected. The fear of messing up and “wasting time”. The fear of being misunderstood or offending others.

These and many more stand as obstacles that keep us from loving our neighbor with the grace and freedom with which God calls us to do every day. Even Jesus was not exempt from these fears, as he battled rejection and doubt all the way up to his final night at Gethsemane.

Yet in today’s readings he continues his ministry on the Sabbath despite the ridicule coming from the Jewish leaders, drawing his courage from the fact that his work is the work of his Father, from whom he receives the power and authority to serve those around him. In a similar way, Jesus calls us to listen the whisper of the Holy Spirit in our own lives and trust in God’s judgement, knowing that if we do He will lift us up out of our fear of death and into new life.

As you go about your week, pay attention to the thoughts and worries that prevent you from genuinely engaging with others and sharing your love with them. Bring all these fears to God in prayer and trust that if you are doing His work on Earth, He will “cut a road through all your mountains” and give you the courage and strength to follow through.

KYLE CEPEDA, ENGINEERING '19

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April 4<sup>th</sup>

God works in mysterious ways.

If you're like me, you grew up hearing this. If you're like me, you also grew up a little annoyed by the vagueness of this saying, leaned on as an explanation when things didn't go quite as planned. But as time's passed I've come to understand what this saying reflects (though I still wish it were more specific).

We will never understand the way God works, how he works, or why. However, each day of our lives testify for his work. As the reading says, we "have never heard his voice nor seen his form," but that does not mean we do not encounter him.

Each prayer answered that we never dared pray in the first place, every time our hearts leaps for joy, and so many moments in between represent times we have come face-to-face with God: meetings we get the choice to acknowledge as testimonies of God's grace or to ignore. Only in accepting this mystery do we accept Him.

Accepting a mystery is hard. There are times when we abandon God, when we cease believing as a result of hardships that do not come from God. But yet, just like in the first reading today, God forgives us for this. Though it causes him great pain, God chooses to be with us through all whether or not we want or believe him to be there.

I challenge you to reflect back on the last time you accepted wholeheartedly Jesus's presence within your life, felt him by your side, believed him to be there. Did you not feel as though you had a special kind of life?

ARDEN BREWER, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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LENT 2019 |

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April 5<sup>th</sup>

Bible history is littered with accounts of the chosen people looking towards God and with those who proclaim His frequently difficult truths with disdain, hatred and even murderous intent. Through the divine revelation culminating in the cross, God laid out a very clear way to live – one that would grant us freedom. Freedom from our vices, freedom to be eternally joyful.

In today's reading from the Book of Wisdom, we see the persecution of those who follow God's teachings, and in the Gospel, we see that same persecution happening to Jesus Himself.

This raises the question for us: when do we look with disdain towards Jesus, His teachings or His creation? Do we treat those around us with love and respect? Do we reach out to help those in need not just in big ways, but the small ways too? Are we truly grateful for and do we use every opportunity and open-door God places in our lives to the fullest extent?

In every moment of our lives we are called to not be the ones persecuting those who preach love and peace in the world, but to be the preachers and love givers instead.

The only question then is – Why not now?

ANDREW KLUZAK, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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Reminder: day of abstinence

LENT 2019 /

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April 6<sup>th</sup>

John's Gospel consistently reiterates that Jesus causes division and confusion. Israel expects an earthly Messiah, someone to lead them against the Roman occupation like David did for the Israelites against the Philistines.

Instead, they get Jesus, a backwater prophet with a message of repentance and pacifism, who pushes caring for the poor, the sick, and the ostracized. Jesus' message has very little to promise in the way of earthly power and wealth, focusing instead upon love of neighbor and humility in suffering. A message like this one confuses and frustrates people who want to live comfortably at the expense of others.

I think that, if we are honest with ourselves, we are as culpable as the Pharisees of Jesus' day were. How often do we mandate that Jesus be who we want, someone who validates the way we want to live? How often do we become frustrated with the Church when she suggests that we relinquish our comforts, wealth, or status for the sake of the marginalized?

How often do we want to believe that if we had been there around Jesus, we would have stayed with him instead of being part of the crowd screaming for his arrest and execution? Even Nicodemus, who knows and loves Jesus as a friend and teacher struggles to defend him.

As we approach Holy Week, let us pray for forgiveness and humility to become who Jesus wants us to be, rather than asking him to become who we want.

PATRICK CONNOLLY, CAMPUS MINISTRY INTERN

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LENT 2019 /

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## April 7<sup>th</sup> – Fifth Sunday of Lent

This past winter break, I travelled with the Agape Service Immersion Program to El Salvador. There, I was truly able to see the power of love and forgiveness as we shared our lives with the people of El Salvador.

I recognize that my time there was not perfect – I could not always understand the stories that were shared or communicate what I was trying to. There were times I was not as invested as I could have been. And yet, in the Gospel and in life, Jesus is not asking us to be perfect.

All that God is asking of us is to try, to give it our best guess.

Before I left, I had made a commitment to love as fully as I could and give that love to all that I encountered on the trip, trying not to let any outside distractions get in the way. Were there times when this love was not perfect? Yes, without a doubt. But, each time God was waiting to help me to move forward in that love and pick up right where I left off.

God has surrounded us with people in our lives who will always be there to push us to better ourselves when we stumble. Likewise, we must be there for when they need a hand. We have no right to judge others for their mistakes, just as we would hope that they would take the same mercy on us

None of us are perfect, and only together can we walk closer to God.

**JEFFREY EICHINGER, ENGINEERING '19**

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April 8<sup>th</sup>

"I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,  
but will have the light of life."

The Gospel today provides us a beacon of hope. Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus shares that He is with us, no matter how treacherous the roads we are bound to travel on. The Pharisees, skeptical in nature, do not believe Jesus. In fact, they claim that Jesus cannot substantiate His promises.

However, Jesus assures that He is true and just – for by His Word and the Word of his Father in Heaven, His testimony meets all requirements of abiding with the law of the land. The passage ends in no response from the Pharisees, suggesting that Jesus either angered or threatened them, or gave them some sense of truth to consider - or perhaps, both.

I find that this passage provides us an invitation to reevaluate our own wholehearted belief in God's Word. Jesus offers us the path to light and life in believing Him – but naturally, we may question His promise. Whether it is a characteristic of the human condition or innate fear of being misled, taking the step to follow Jesus may feel absurd sometimes.

When we pray for clarity, peace of mind, and hope for better days ahead, we should truly consider what it means to live a life worth living. Maybe that will be enough to center our lives on Christ's Love.

Shine your light for others.

CODY STROLIA, CAMPUS MINISTRY INTERN

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LENT 2019 |

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April 9<sup>th</sup>

“I AM.”

When God called Moses to lead the Israelites away from slavery in Egypt, God did so under the name “I AM” (Exodus 3:14). In this tale of liberation, the Israelites began their journey across the desert towards the promised land. In today’s Gospel, Jesus uses the name “I AM” in reference to himself. This reveals his true identity as God, the same God who liberated the Israelites.

As God, Jesus is the Liberator – freeing us from the bondage of sin through his birth, death, and resurrection. As a human, Jesus is the model of what authentic human liberation looks like – freedom to respond wholly to God’s call to bring love into the world. Jesus is both Liberator and the perfect model of liberation!

As Christians, we are constantly being called to conversion: liberation from our old ways so we are free to manifest God’s love in this world. Moving towards freedom is difficult. Like the Israelites, we can remember the “good old days,” before we had to change our lives in any meaningful way. Change is hard. It is more comfortable to keep things as they are than to move toward conversion. This was the sin of the Pharisees, who were more concerned with maintaining things than they were with moving towards a deeper understanding and expression of love.

Liberation is not an easy path, but it’s the path of Christ. Where might God be inviting you to freedom today?

SEAN O’ROURKE, CAMPUS MINISTER

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LENT 2019 |

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April 10<sup>th</sup>

In the first reading, the king's pride is what put him on the wrong side of the story. He didn't want to change. But when faced with the truth, he was forced to revise his previous thoughts.

There are other times where we are the prisoners. It can be uncomfortable to live our faith, but God calls on us to spread his message in both words and actions. We must stand up for what we believe in, and be open to change in areas where we can grow.

In today's Gospel, Jesus proclaims "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Again, there is the theme of truth. As long as we follow Him, the Truth, we will never be in the dark. There is comfort in Jesus, and he will guide us through the good times and the bad.

He later states, "everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin ... if the Son frees you, then you will truly be free." Everyone bears the weight of sin, but His sacrifice truly saves us.

Jesus concludes with "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and am here[.]" The familial roots of Abraham's descendants don't make them holy; they must honor their ancestry by following the God Abraham did. Everyone, even those who have "spiritual high ground," must continue to work to better themselves in God's eyes.

FORD YOUNG, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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LENT 2019 |

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April 11<sup>th</sup>

Today's first reading and psalm focus on God's commitment to fulfilling his promises to His people. God commits so much to Abraham, and similarly to each of us, and yet all He asks for in return is loyalty through faith. This is both incredible and intimidating.

It highlights how hurtful my betrayal of God's covenant through sin can be. God wants to give me so much because He loves me. His one request is that I have faith and serve His will. How painful it must be when I repay that generosity and His open arms with fear, distrust, or misguided desires.

During Lent, we seek to deny ourselves of something and/or to add something to our lives in order to bring ourselves closer to God. We can use this time to better fulfill our commitment to God's covenant by growing in our faith. If today, or anytime during this Lent, you have been struggling with your resolution, I recommend that you reread the first reading. Look at all that God offers to Abraham while only asking for His faith in return.

This is what God asks for during Lent, a chance for you to grow closer to Him in your faith and in return you will gain so much more from your relationship with Him.

SARAH DYOTT, CAMPUS MINISTRY INTERN

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April 12<sup>th</sup>

Jesus is always pointing out the incommensurable difference between what is on earth and what is from Heaven. He is the testimony from on High, which none of us has ever seen. Through His testimony, He is our only source of knowledge.

To accept this testimony means to certify that God is telling the truth. However, the credibility of my testimony is linked to my actions as a witness: if I choose sin, others will not believe in my testimony. Therefore in my testimony, there is a choice to make: Jesus or me.

This choice we have to make is God's way of making us participate in His plan of salvation and the call that we be actors in it, under the guidance of His beloved Son and the Spirit. To accept fully His testimony is to listen to Jesus, to turn to God as a child turns to his father.

Let us ask God to help us to choose Christ, even if it requires sacrifice. May we, with the grace of God, be purified in our intentions and in our desire to be Christian; may we respond to our vocation to be a witness to a reality that does not belong to us but is entrusted to us. May Christ live in us and may glory return to God alone, not to us.

ETIENNE DURIEZ, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

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Reminder: day of abstinence

LENT 2019 /

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April 13<sup>th</sup>

In today's Gospel reading, High Priest Caiaphas and the other Pharisees decide that Jesus is a dangerous threat who must be killed in order to prevent a crackdown by the Romans. Yet we know Jesus is not a violent radical, intent on establishing his rule over the earth—his Kingdom is in heaven. The persecution is unjust.

Even today, unjust persecutions take place far too often. In many places throughout the world, people are hunted down based on their ethnicity, religion, or political inclinations.

In China, Uyghur Muslims are forcibly placed in re-education camps. In Myanmar, the Rohingya are violently expelled. In North Korea, Christians are still hunted down and tortured to this day. Periodically, these persecutions rise to the level of genocides, bringing unspeakable horror to the world.

If you were to go to Jesus in that desert town of Ephraim and tell him about the unjust persecutions that exist today, what would he tell you to do? Would he tell you to remain silent and allow the victims to suffer and die like he did? Or would he tell you to speak up for them?

WALTER TREAT, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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## April 14<sup>th</sup> – Palm Sunday

One of my new favorite paintings is Poussin's *The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist*. Poussin paints a solemn scene of the Last Supper, as Christ is surrounded by his Apostles, instituting the sacrament of the Eucharist. Unlike more traditional images of the Last Supper, this feels realistic, emotional, and intimate.

The Apostles lean in towards Christ, their faces are filled with raw but subtle emotion, and the soft light beams on Christ as He celebrates the Eucharist for the first time. This magnificent scene demands that we viewers participate in this moment of the Last Supper, connecting us to the emotion and the power in that moment. This scene of intimacy opened my eyes to Christ's Passion in a way I had not experienced before.

Rather than passively hearing the readings on Palm Sunday, feeling removed from the narrative, I am reminded that I walk alongside Christ throughout Holy Week.

I welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, hailing Him with palms. I sit with Him, as He says to me, "This is my body, which will be given for you." I follow Him to the garden where He prays in agony, yet I fail to stay awake. Like Peter, I deny Christ repeatedly. I reject Him as I cry, "Crucify him!" I weep for Him on His walk to Calvary, and I stand beside His mother at the foot of the Cross.

This Holy Week, I want to constantly remind myself of the reality of Christ's Passion and fully enter into His suffering and death. Will you join me and the Apostles in walking with Christ every step of the way?

LIZ MURPHY, ARTS & SCIENCES '20

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April 15<sup>th</sup>

Today's Old Testament reading emphasizes our role in fulfilling Christ's mission to "bring forth justice to the nations." Unfortunately, by the time Jesus began His public ministry, the public's idea of "justice" had become corrupted.

The priests wanted to kill the man whom Jesus had just risen from the dead because this miracle threatened their religious authority. Judas, meanwhile, complains about Mary's apparent failure to give to the poor, but only because he regularly steals from them. Jesus (rightly) calls him out for this, but utters a rather perplexing sentence: "You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

What does Jesus mean by this? Is trying to help the poor an impossible task? To find the answer, we should turn to Deuteronomy 15:11:

"The land will never lack for needy persons; that is why I command you: 'Open your hand freely to your poor and to your needy kin in your land.'"

Jesus's statement is not admitting defeat against injustice, but rather issuing a challenge to Judas, and the rest of us. Are we opening our hands freely to our poor? Do we act charitably out of self-interest rather than a genuine concern for the marginalized?

We have probably seen our peers buy non-essential "luxuries" and, like Judas, might consider this wasteful. However, let us look inside our own pocketbooks—and hearts—first.

LAUREN KANG, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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LENT 2019 |

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April 16<sup>th</sup>

“Where I go you cannot follow.”

When I envision this phrase as a real-life exchange, I find it heartbreaking. I see desperation and loss of selfhood in the one receiving these words. Why is this person leaving me? Where will he be? What could I have done differently to make him stay?

We all know that nothing lasts forever, and whether it is the deterioration of a romantic relationship or the loss of a loved one, that pain can stick with us long after those implied words have disappeared into thin air. In this instance, however, Jesus does not cut off contact, nor eliminate the opportunity for being reunited.

Instead he adds, “you will follow later.”

We are not left behind to wonder why we failed to measure up, but are given the reassurance that we are more than enough. At the end of the road, we will finally reach that beautiful somewhere that we’d only ever read of and thought about to ourselves.

Like a father with his children, Jesus knows that it will be okay; he’ll only be gone for a little while. He knows that we small, confused, bundles of anxiety will wonder where he went and become afraid that he will never come back, and so he tells us that he will return. Maybe not now, but soon, and when he does, nothing will ever separate us again.

ABIGAIL ANDERSON, ARTS & SCIENCES '21

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April 17<sup>th</sup>

In this Lenten season of abstinence and sacrifice, we ask ourselves how much we would do for Jesus. In today's Gospel, we ask the inverse.

How much would it take for us to betray Him?

For the greedy Judas, he only needed thirty pieces to betray Jesus. Surely, such a vile man should not be taken as a representation of humanity? Yet, even Peter, the rock of our Church, betrayed Jesus. Despite his insistence that he would never betray Him, when his life was in danger, he verbally denied Him. How could these Apostles, chosen personally by Jesus, betray Him?

The reason: they prioritized Earthly desires over His love. Judas wanted money. Peter wanted his earthly life. It is so tempting to value what can be seen. It is so much harder to trust, to have faith, in the Mystery.

Every time we sin, we betray Jesus. As long as God is not number one, sin is possible. A sinless human, Mary remained pure by valuing God's will above all else.

However, we are not Mary. Like Peter, we can lie to preserve the status quo, to choose the easy way out rather than the Truth. Like Judas, we can be bribed, whether through money, false earthly love, or some other fleshly desire.

The struggle of Lent, then, is to try and be like Mary, to really put God first. What a struggle this is, too.

STEVEN ANGTUACO, ARTS & SCIENCES '22

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## 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.

## April 18<sup>th</sup> – Holy Thursday

*Holy Thursday Mass: 7pm, CSC Chapel with adoration until midnight*

Tonight marks the beginning of the Holy Triduum, arguably the three most sacred days of the liturgical year. May God bless you during this time.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, “What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later.” Jesus Himself promises to reveal the reasons for His actions in the future. It is a message of hope and points toward salvation. On the other hand, it is also a message of extreme trepidation and fear.

“You do not understand now.” How must the apostles have felt when their beloved Jesus was hanging from the cross? The man who was supposed to restore Israel was nailed to a cross and killed. Their sorrow would’ve been extreme and many would’ve felt hopeless. And yet, days later, the Good Lord rose from the dead. Not only that, but He promised us eternal life for all who follow Him.

This is far beyond what the apostles could’ve dreamed. This is an extraordinary message for us to remember. Every story of despair – when that despair is turned towards Christ – ends in unbelievable glory. And so too will our lives end in glory if we follow Christ.

As Christ offered His sufferings for our sins, may we offer our sufferings, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, to Christ. If we are able to do this, surely we will be able to join St. Paul at the end of our earthly journeys in exclaiming, “I have kept the faith.”

LIAM MARDIS, BUSINESS '19

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## April 19<sup>th</sup> – Good Friday

*Good Friday Service: 7pm, CSC Chapel*

As the author Richard Rohr, O.F.M. wrote, "Faith is a journey into darkness, into not-knowing."

Today we remember Christ's passion and suffering. Almost 2,000 years ago, a Jewish carpenter, Jesus of Nazareth, the redeemer of the world, was humiliated, tortured, and crucified.

After a few short years of public ministry, Jesus had accumulated a substantial number of followers, many of whom, such as the apostles, were some of his closest friends. They had given up their previous lives and pledged themselves to following a man and his teachings. Now Jesus, whom they loved and believed was the son of God, had just been tortured, whipped, beaten, and nailed to a tree.

O' what a darkness they must have felt.

The darkness at Christ's crucifixion must have extended into their hearts and souls. Was Jesus truly the Son of God? Why did he allow himself to die? What do we do now? These questions and more surely flooded their minds. Yet even in this darkness, their journeys had not ended, but barely begun. Even though there may have been stumbles and doubts (see Thomas), these men and women would go on to bear witness to Christ and his teachings.

Let us look to them during this time as models of faith; a faith that we know can never be perfect, a faith of humility and surrender to God. Let us allow this faith to nourish and sustain us until the resurrection.

**WILLIAM MACKAY, BUSINESS '19**

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**Reminder: day of fasting & abstinence**

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## April 20<sup>th</sup> – Holy Saturday

*Easter Vigil Mass: 7:30pm, CSC Chapel*

In the acclaimed Pixar animated film, *The Incredibles*, every day when Mr. Incredible returns home from work, a small boy is sitting on a tricycle at the end of the driveway. In one scene, he arrives home and turns to sternly ask the boy, “Well, what are you waiting for?” to which the child responds, “I don’t know, something AMAZING...I guess.”

When it comes to God, most of us probably struggle with patience. We want proof. We want answers. If the reality God has given us doesn’t match up with what we expected, we get frustrated or despair.

The Synoptic Gospels all give accounts of women – particularly Mary Magdalene – remaining at Jesus’s tomb after it is sealed. We can assume she plans to do this consistently, seeing as she returns to the tomb early in the morning following the Sabbath, and then finds out that Jesus’s body is gone. (But we haven’t gotten to that part yet.)

Mary, what the heck are you doing? Your Messiah is dead. We deserve to ask, “Well, what are you waiting for?” But this question stifles the hope that is central to our lives as Christians. To question Mary’s waiting in the midst of utter confusion is to question our own decision to live as though there is a Heaven. Why are you living for Christ? Why continue to pray? Why share the Gospel message?

Our responses to these questions rise up to our Lord – us, Mary Magdalene, and Tricycle Kid – proclaiming what it is in times of confusion and waiting that we hope for: something AMAZING...I guess.

INGRID HERRENBRUCK, BUSINESS '20

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## April 21<sup>st</sup> – Easter Sunday

*Easter Sunday Masses: 9:30am & 11:30am, Graham Chapel*

At first, this seems like the perfect reading for Easter. John enters the tomb, and “he saw and he believed.” But that’s not exactly what’s going on here. The last line of the Gospel inverts it all: “*For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.*”

Peter and John don’t yet believe that Christ is risen; they believe what Mary declared to them: that someone had taken His body. The true mystery is revealed in the following scene, when angels and the risen Christ appear to Mary, and she must then proclaim the Good News to the others, but today’s reading ends before that happens. Today is Easter, shouldn’t the message be Christ is Risen? We get the traces of Christ’s resurrection—the burial shroud, the sudarium—but no recognition, no resolution...yet.

Sometimes it can feel like that for us. Sometimes, even though we know what happens in the end, we don’t quite get it. We’re a bit like the disciples. We know that there’s something different, something that’s worth exploring, but we don’t quite get it. What happens once you learn that the shroud isn’t there for the reason you thought it was, but that Christ actually did rise from the dead? Well, what did the disciples do?

See, the Resurrection is such a life-changing moment. It’s the moment. It’s when God gave us everything, even what we did not deserve. That’s what the disciples saw. They ran into the far corners of the world with that message and they died defending that.

What will we do with the message of the Resurrection?

LUCAS DUBE, CAMPUS MINISTRY INTERN

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