



Lenten Reflection 2022

Artwork by Cynthia Viets '25

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Lenten Schedule:

Ash Wednesday 3/2/22

Medical Campus Services:

12:05pm: Medical Campus, EPNEC Great Room

5pm: STLCOP Spirituality Center

Main Campus services:

Ecumenical Ashes Service: 12:15pm, CSC chapel

Mass: 5:30pm, CSC Chapel

Palm Sunday 4/10

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

Holy Thursday 4/14

Mass: 7pm, CSC Chapel

Adoration afterwards until midnight

Good Friday 4/15

Service: 7pm, CSC Chapel

Easter Vigil 4/16

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

Easter 4/17

Mass: 9:30am* & 11:30am*, CSC Chapel (no evening Mass anywhere in Archdiocese)

*Subject to change, check our website for update

Weekly Ongoing Events:

Sundays:

Mass: 11am and 4:30pm & Sunday Supper for Students, CSC Chapel (no 4:30pm on 3/13)

Mondays:

Dinner at BD: 5:30-7pm

Tuesdays

DUC Lunch: 11am-1pm

UHSP Mass: 12pm, Spirituality Center

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

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

Wednesdays

Adoration (except 3/16 & 4/13): 7pm-8pm

Mass: 8pm, CSC Chapel (except 3/16)

Thursdays

Med School Mass: 12pm, Danforth Chapel

Fridays:

Mass: 12:05pm, CSC Chapel (except 3/11, 3/18, & 4/15)

Special Events:

Spirituality of the Lawyer Luncheon

3/3, 12-1pm, WashU Law School, FMI:
woytek@washucsc.org

Cod Squad Fish Fry Tour

3/4, 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, FMI: jenniferquinn@washucsc.org

Grad Student/Young Adult (GSYA) Day of Reflection:

Listening To God:

3/5, 9am-3pm, @CSC, FMI: woytek@washucsc.org

Endings & Beginnings: Evening for Class of 2022

3/6, 6-7:30pm

Service Saturdays:

3/5 & 4/2

Listen to the Ladies: Global Synod Listening Session

3/8, 7-9pm, CSC Social Hall, FMI:

jenniferquinn@washucsc.org

Grad Student/Young Adult Happy Hour:

3/24, 5:30-7:30pm @ CSC

Stations of the Cross

3/25, 5pm @ CSC

LGBTQ+ Soul

3/29, 4/12, 6pm-7pm, CSC Library

Confession Marathon

3/29 3pm-midnight @ CSC

CSU Fish Fry

4/1, 6-8pm

Retreat in Everyday Life (Busy Person's Retreat)

4/3-4/8, FMI: orourke@washucsc.org

Stations of the Cross

4/8, 5pm @ CSC

CRS Operation Rice Bowl Meal & Discussion

4/8, 5:45pm, CSC Social Hall, FMI: ajmickles@wustl.edu

ANAM CARA: Anytime that works for you

It means - **Spiritual Friendship**. A chance to meet 1:1 with Fr.Gary or any campus minister you choose to talk about life and questions of faith. All at the service of growing together.

A Note from the Director of Ministry:

RENEWAL

Our Lenten journey this year falls in the midst of a time of **renewal**. **Renewal** is the theme that connects both the “All Things New” process here in St. Louis and the “Synod on Synodality” for the universal Church. Our Church is calling us as a people to journey together and create a vision for the future of our faith communities by listening to the Holy Spirit speak through the Body of Christ. What is our role in that **renewal**? To embody the Church that we desire. Therefore, we too must seek out personal **renewal**.

During this time of Lent we are called by the prophet Joel on Ash Wednesday to, “Rend our hearts,” so that they may be converted. Joel is calling us to give over our hearts to God so that we can be open to something new forming, so that, by the end of this Lenten journey, as we hear from the prophet Ezekiel during the Easter Vigil, “(God) will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you.”

How might we seek **renewal** during Lent? The traditional Lenten practices of Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving can chart a course for us.

PRAYER: As the Church enters into these processes of **renewal** by first listening to the People of God, let us ask ourselves this Lent: How much time do I devote to listening to God? To others in my faith community? To my own internal voice? Act: This reflection book, written by our students, can aid your prayer and listening

throughout Lent. Also, hone your listening skills by attending one of our retreats during Lent.

FASTING: As our Church strives to purge itself of practices and habits that have stunted people's experience of God's love; what can you let go of this Lent that is keeping you from being a conduit of God's love? Act: Fast from behaviors or words that tear people down, including yourself.

ALMSGIVING: As our Church seeks out ways it can better serve the needs of our world, let us ask ourselves: What gifts or experiences might I have to offer that can help the church become the best version of itself? Act: Help someone in need through the CSC Service Saturdays or participate in the CRS Rice Bowl program.

Troy Woytek
CSC Director of Ministry

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/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/>

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

Loyola Press – Ignatian Spirituality:

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

Center for Action and Contemplation – Daily Meditations:

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

Introduction to the Booklet:

Welcome to the Lenten Reflection Booklet! This booklet is made up of student reflections that will guide you in your daily meditation of scripture. Daily readings can be found online at usccb.org.

We hope that this book can act as a guide during this season of Lent. These students' reflections are just one way in which the Holy Spirit has spoken. We will spend these next 40 days seeking an understanding of the weight and mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. May these words open your heart to hear, to see, and to receive the gift of His sacrifice and His love all around us.

Jenny Nguyen (2021) and Zane Watson (2022),
CSU Spiritual Chair

March 2nd – Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:12-18

Psalms 51:3-6ab, 12-14, 17

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

In the Ash Wednesday gospel, Jesus gives us some important things to remember as we go through our Lenten journeys. In short, he tells us not to act like the ‘hypocrites.’ He tells us not to perform actions associated with Lent (praying, fasting, giving alms, etc.) for the sake of being noticed by our peers.

The purpose of praying and fasting during Lent is to strengthen our own faith lives and relationships with God. Those two things help make us better people and affect the way we go about our lives.

One of the coolest things I’ve learned in my 2.5 years at the CSC is how simultaneously unique and identical everyone’s faith journey is. Here, I’ve met people who are accustomed to worshiping in a different language, ‘Cradle Catholics’, people who had to find their own way to Catholicism from different or no faith, people who abandoned their faith but chose to return, people who still struggle with their place in the church because of their identity, and so many more. Yet, we students have one thing in common: we choose to be here. We are not here to be noticed or because our families force us to be here. We are here because we want to be here, and we want to find a way to get closer to God.

Sebastian Laboy, Engineering ‘23

Reminder: day of fasting and abstinence

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 5th precept, fasting on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday and abstaining from meat every Friday.



March 3rd

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalms 1:1-4, 6

Luke 9:22-25

The Lenten readings ask us how we can follow God. Moses talks about the covenant made between Abraham's family and God where Abraham promised to follow God's will in exchange for God granting Abraham's family long-lasting prosperity. In the Gospel, Jesus explains how to follow God's will, giving us our basis for understanding both sides of the new covenant He came to make.

One of the most striking things about the passages is how the things God calls us to are paradoxically easy and extremely difficult. Moses gives us a seemingly simple way to achieve the happiness and prosperity that God promises. All we have to do is follow His commandments. However, as both Jesus tells us and we know from our personal experience, following God's will is not without its challenges. There are a lot of roadblocks to something that should be very easy. But along the way, we face an infinite number of temptations and threats to our faith. Entering into Lent, we are called to be like Jesus in the desert and live with less. In this, we follow His will, but we are abundantly human and prone to temptation and even risk rejection and our own "elders, chief priests, and scribes" who may reject us.

Nonetheless, I remember a common theme in my conversations with Fr. Patrick during the busy person retreat: trust in God. If we can truly surrender ourselves and trust that God's path is right, we can follow His path without straying.

William Labrador, Arts & Sciences '24

March 4th

Isaiah 58:1-9a

Psalms 51:3-6ab, 18-19

Matthew 9:14-15

A few years ago, I tried to give up coffee for Lent. It had become a central part of my morning routine, and while I knew it would be difficult, I assumed that a more painful fast would yield deeper spiritual rewards. Instead, I just turned into a miserable version of myself. Worst of all, I was unable to show up in the ways that my friends, coworkers, and family needed. I lasted only two weeks before quitting – and I think God applauded that choice.

I think it's all too common to view fasting as transactional: I give up this, God gives me that. This attitude inevitably ends in disappointment. When we don't immediately see fruits of our fast, we feel God has ignored us or let us down. In today's first reading, Isaiah challenges us to redefine our very definition of fasting. He explicitly says that God prefers us to fast in a way that liberates the oppressed and welcomes the marginalized. Instead of an inward expression of self-punishment, fasting should be an outward expression of Love.

How radically different the world could be if we viewed fasting as an opportunity to bring God's kingdom to earth! Jesus reminds us in today's Gospel that His time walking the earth is finite. Today, as St. Teresa of Avila said, "Christ has no body but yours." As we begin this Lenten season, let us ponder how we're called to fast in a way that shares God's loving presence with the world.

Grace Anderson, MPH Candidate '23

Reminder: day of abstinence

March 5th

Isaiah 58:9b-14
Psalm 86:1-6, 3-6
Luke 5:27-32

Primarily, Lent is seen as a purgative time—a time in which we look inwards to face and address what we perceive as barriers in our own individual relationships with God. This paints a very personal portrait of Lent, and while it is undeniably important to engage in this kind of introspection, it is incomplete on its own. One of the greatest gifts that we have been given as a Church is a sense of community, and the Lenten season presents a perfect opportunity to lean on, learn from, and strengthen our communities through the recognition that every person within it is constantly changing and growing.

As Christians, we are called to emulate Christ in our daily lives. One of the most sincere ways that we can do this is in accepting, loving, and forgiving as Christ did. We do not need to search very hard to see that life presents vastly different circumstances for each person, and that what we're taught when we're young—or conversely, what we may have missed out on—has a profound impact on the way in which we navigate through life. What this helps us to realize is that we are all at different places in both our relationships with God and one another, but no matter where we are, we are not fixed there.

One of the most remarkable things about human beings is their ability to change, and as we look inwards to see where we can change and grow this Lent, we should also recognize our mission to support others through their times of change with openness and appreciation.

Alayna Mickles, Arts & Sciences '23

March 6th – First Sunday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15

Romans 10:8-13

Luke 4:1-13

In today's gospel, we find the devil trying to convince Jesus to perform some miracle or act to prove that he is the son of God. So often I find myself in a similar place—using my doubt in God as a justification for needing some sort of signs. I know after years of education by the Vietnamese nuns that I shouldn't look for and especially rely on signs to sustain my faith. But yet last year when I was in the process of figuring out where I would end up next, I found myself asking for signs constantly. If I'm meant to be here—please let me get this job. If you want me to leave this relationship—just prove that he doesn't love me. If you don't want me to go to this place for the wrong reasons—just don't even give me the chance to make that mistake. I didn't know what I wanted and rather than asking God for help with discernment and guiding me through the process, I prayed extremely prescriptively and basically asked for signs only for the outcomes I wanted. While all's well that ends well—and I'll be starting my career in a company I love in Dallas in just a few months—the tendency to play God definitely didn't go away in a blink of an eye. As we find ourselves in this Lenten season and a season of life with so many decisions, take a moment to ask ourselves where we can best do God's will rather than where we can best serve ourselves. Lord, help us to trust in you even when there isn't a "sign".

Christine Nguyen, Business '22

March 7th

Leviticus 19: 1-2, 11-18

Psalm 19:8-10, 15

Matthew 25:31-46

Today's readings describe our call to serve the disabled in our communities. We know about the miracles of giving sight to the blind, sound to the d/Deaf, and movement to the paralyzed. Maybe it's these stories that cause the Church to pray for cures for such things. But if you talk to the disabled community, you'd find that most disabled individuals don't want a cure. Disability is integral to their existence. The problem isn't the disability but our unwillingness to accommodate for its existence.

The first reading says, "You shall not curse the deaf, or put a stumbling block in front of the blind." This represents how we as Catholics should treat disability. Instead of praying for a cure and subsequently ignoring disabled joy, lived experiences, and the true needs of the disabled, let's remove the stumbling blocks that exist for the 1/5 of us with disabilities. Let's provide elevators, closed captions, accessible air travel, thoughtful language, fair pay, and marriage equality so that nobody loses their disability benefits in order to marry the person they love.

There's more guidance in the Gospel, which reminds us to provide for those in need. Feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty extends beyond the literal. Remember those who cannot eat by their mouths and those who must drink through their veins. When clothing the naked, keep in mind those whose bodies aren't designed for or included in advertisements. When visiting the imprisoned, acknowledge the misinformation that causes escalations of force against the autistic, d/Deaf, physically disabled, and so on.

One last thing I want you to take away is the line, "love your neighbor as yourself." It is a well-known phrase. But some people need to be reminded of the inverse: love yourself as you love your neighbor.

Angela Gormley, Arts & Sciences '23

March 8th

Isaiah 55:10-11

Psalm 34:4-7, 16-19

Matthew 6:7-15

“From all their distress God rescues the just.” Think of a time when you have felt overwhelming distress, where did you turn? For me, I turn to my memories of moments when I felt total peace and calm. As a child, every night I would pray the Our Father prayer with my father before going to sleep. It soothed me and lulled me to sleep. In the gospel, we hear how Jesus taught us to pray this prayer. Ask yourself: how can I use prayer as an escape from distress? How can I turn to God and his voice when I am overwhelmed? I invite you to know take a minute to evaluate how you pray and then do it. Pray the distress away.

Gracie Mersmann, Business ‘22

March 9th

Jonah 3:1-10

Psalms 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19

Luke 11:29-32

In today's readings, we read about Jonah, who delivers a message from God to the people of Ninevah. God is angry with the evildoings of the people and threatens to destroy the city in 40 days. In response, the people repent and pray for God's forgiveness. God sees their goodness and desire to change, and does not carry out His threat.

We don't always stop to think about our sins. Even what may seem like the most minor of evil isn't something to overlook and ignore. The people of Ninevah didn't bother to address those sins until their lives were threatened. What will you do when God tests you? We do not know the time or place that we will be tested. But we do know that our God is a loving and forgiving God. He is always there for you and will always forgive you. Be ready for God at all times.

No one is perfect. The people of Ninevah were far from it. Yet when tested, they transformed themselves, and by doing so were saved. It is never too late to repent and pray for forgiveness, whether that's years, 40 days, or minutes before the hour of our death.

Vyto Staniskis, Engineering '24

March 10th

Esther C:12, 14-16, 23-25

Psalm 138:1-3, 7c-8

Matthew 7:7-12

As I read the first passage, I couldn't help but think that I wish I was a little more like Esther. She was an instrument designed for a greater purpose. With the help of God, she called out to God for strength and asked Him to change the heart of King Ahasuerus. Like Esther, we should all take the time to tell God that we want to be used as an instrument for a greater purpose.

The next passage was a Psalm that kept repeating the same phrase over and over again: "Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me." On any day, at any time. We can call onto Him and He'll answer. It may not always be the answer you're looking for at that very second, but it will suffice. Call onto Him. His door is open 24/7.

"Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the doors will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."

Matthew 7:8

I love these verses because they hold so much power. We serve a gracious God who is more than willing to be the answer that we're looking for, but it's a two way street. So, we also have to be willing to put in the effort.

Gloria Nishimwe, Sam Fox '25

March 11th

Ezekiel 18:21-28

Psalm 130:1-8

Matthew 5:20-26

“I’m sorry.” These are two of the hardest words in the English language to bring yourself to say. It is really one of the worst feelings to have to go to another person and admit that you were wrong. However unpleasant it may be, this is one of the most fundamental commandments God has given us. We are called both to say sorry to God, repenting of our sins, and to say sorry to those around us who we have wronged.

Saying sorry to God, while it may not be easy, is the most certain. God, in His infinite mercy, has instituted for us the sacrament of reconciliation. Through this sacrament, we may come to God with a contrite heart and apologize for what we have done, and God, being our loving Creator, will grant us forgiveness for those sins.

Saying sorry to other people, however, is both difficult and uncertain. The only thing we can certainly change is ourselves. We can change our behavior and strive to be a better person, but in the end, the person we have wronged may not forgive us. So, instead of fretting over whether others will forgive us, we should strive to be better, try to mend our past mistakes, and most importantly be forgiving people ourselves. In this time of penance, as well as in our whole lives, we should work to resolve any problems with our neighbors. And when our neighbors come to us seeking forgiveness, we should remember that we need forgiveness just as much as they do.

Matthew Denton, Arts & Sciences ‘25

Reminder: day of abstinence

March 12th

Deuteronomy 26:16-19

Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8

Matthew 5:43-48

“So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect...”

On first read, this line is pretty jolting. Is this to be read as a hyperbole? How am I, as a human with many faults and failings, called to be “perfect,” knowing perfectly well that I’m likely to mess up more than I would like to admit? What even does “perfect” mean now, in a world with so many contradictions and expectations?

When I reflect on who God is, as the source from whom all love flows, I can begin to understand what this line is asking. In this reading Jesus is calling his listeners to take the extra step, to not only love those that you can tolerate, but to love even the ones who you consider to be enemies. He speaks of a God who lets the sun rise on both the bad and the good. Could this call to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is, be more centered on how we are loving others, rather than on achieving ideals set on us by society? What would our world look like if instead of trying the latest fashion trend or making the best post on social media, we spent a little more time trying to make a positive impact on someone else’s life? In no way is this call of extravagant love easy - but isn’t Lent a great time to try and reflect with God how you can be more loving in your life?

Mary Bryan, Campus Ministry Intern

March 13th – Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

Psalms 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 9:28b-36

What is the voice that you listen to in your everyday life? It feels almost cliché at this point to say that the world in 2022 is full of voices and noises that we often refer to as “distractions”. However, how much do we actually listen to those other voices and noises, and not just hear them? Do we simply hear one thing, have a thought about it, and then wait for the other person to finish talking before saying our piece? I sometimes wonder, if I was able to have a conversation with Jesus, what would I say to him? I think it is an important part of our nature to share our genuine self with others, but if it were Jesus we were talking to, we would have nothing to share. Surely Jesus already knows exactly who we are and what defines us. As a servant and friend, it is generous of Peter to offer to make 3 tents in today’s gospel. Wouldn’t you like a genuine favor from a friend? I think, however, when we find ourselves hearing Jesus’ voice, it may not be best to surmise what we would say, but rather focus on what is being said to us. We are called not to occupy our minds with earthly things, and when we follow the heavenly voice, the Lord promises us great things. I just hope that when Jesus speaks to me, it won’t take burning fires and shadow-casting clouds to get me to listen.

Matthew Schwartz, Engineering ‘24

March 14th

Daniel 9:4b-10

Psalm 79:8-9, 11, 13

Luke 6:36-38

Guilt is something I struggle with a lot. Did I just sin? Did I do the right thing? Sinning is human. There is good news! He is quick to forgive. We must only seek Him out. Today's readings are a comforting reminder that Jesus is always with us, even in spite of our sins. He is rich in compassion. Today's gospel reminds us of an important step for forgiveness. "Forgive and you will be forgiven." While yes, we must seek Him out, part of that seeking out includes seeking out and forgiving others. Lent is the most important time of the year to seek forgiveness. If we do it now, as reminded in our Gospel, we will get what we give.

This saying also applies to judgment. We are also reminded that He won't judge us as long as we don't judge others. The same goes for condemnation. If we don't condemn, He won't condemn us. This is a lot easier said than done. The most basic thing we can do to achieve these things, I think, is to fill yourself with love. Remember how Jesus loves us and carry that love into your daily life.

Cynthia Viets, Sam Fox '25

March 15th

Isaiah 1:10, 16-20

Psalms 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23

Matthew 23:1-12

In this second week of Lent, God invites us to reexamine the alignment of our intentions and actions. The Gospel reading today distinguishes between the ideals we profess and those we actually carry out. Jesus calls out the Pharisees for attention seeking, as they do not practice what they preach. Though this message often feels worn out, Lent is the perfect time to reflect on where this might ring true in our own lives. During this time of pause, the habits we cultivate allow us to more closely model Jesus' example of love. What is that area in our life we have been reflecting on lately? How might we reinvigorate our commitment to our Lenten promises? Whether giving something up or introducing a new practice, it is easy to fall behind on our original intentions. We are called to recommit to our transformation in God. Where do we find ourselves emulating the Pharisees and not practicing what we preach?

Mary Kate Charles, Sam Fox '24

March 16th

Jeremiah 18:18-20

Psalm 31:5-6, 14-16

Matthew 20:17-28

Today's readings share a similar theme of having faith in the Lord even amid difficult times and in the case of Jerimiah and Jesus, persecution. The first reading is about Jerimiah, who is a Hebrew prophet, and the people of Judah planning his death. In response to this, Jerimiah prays to the Lord and says that he has prayed for his enemies and still follows the will of the Lord, remaining a faithful follower. The first part of the gospel reading is Jesus warning his disciples about his death and resurrection as they are going to Jerusalem. The second part of the gospel reading is the mother of James and John asking Jesus for them to have a place in the Kingdom of God. In his response to this, Jesus asks them if they really know what they are asking for and if they can really commit to following him to get to Heaven. When reading these passages something that stuck out to me was that to have a place in Heaven with Jesus, we must be active participators in our faith and not just bystanders. For me, this looks like staying active in the CSC community and having a daily prayer routine even when it gets difficult, and life gets busy. Sticking to a prayer routine is not always an easy task for me as there can be days, weeks, and sometimes even months when keeping the faith is hard, but remembering the kindness of God and the ultimate goal of Heaven helps pull me out of the prayer rut.

Sophia Miller, Arts & Sciences '24

March 17th

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Psalms 1:1-4, 6

Luke 16:19-31

In today's Gospel, we hear Jesus tell the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man lived a very opulent life on earth, while Lazarus was a poor man lying outside his house. When they died, Lazarus went to heaven, and the rich man to hell. The rich man calls out to Father Abraham from hell, asking for mercy, but his requests are denied.

This Gospel reading forces us to confront the reality of death: the reality of heaven and hell. It is easy to live life on earth, surrounded by worldly blessings, and forget the end-goal: eternal life in heaven with God. It is easy to be like the rich man, forgetting who gave us those blessings. And in today's reading, the lack of mercy for the rich man in hell can be intimidating. However, I believe that Jesus isn't trying to scare us with this reading. He is trying to remind us of our end-goal.

As you go about your day today, I encourage you to remember what you are living for: Christ. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for your blessings, and look for a chance to help someone less fortunate today. We truly are Christ's hands and feet on earth, and in our journey to make it to Him, let us bring along with us those who we meet on the way.

Kate Flynn, Arts & Sciences '24

March 18th

Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a

Psalm 105:16-21

Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

This parable reflects upon God's goodness and patience. The gospel tells us that the kingdom of God is a gift from God. This shows us that God truly wants the best for us and that He is willing to give us His trust regardless of our backgrounds, tendencies, or beliefs. If we look at the vineyard in today's gospel as the world that God created for us, then God has graciously entrusted us, the tenants, with His vineyard to take care of and look after. He provides us with everything we need to flourish in life and gives us the freedom to decide how to live our lives; however, when the time comes, He will ask us what we did with our gifts that He gave us. Will we have produced good or evil? Will our pride and selfishness of the material world overcome the joy of living the life God gave us? From today's scripture, it is my hope that the following message is taken away: flourish in the life and world that God has given us. Enjoy the precious moments of beauty, and do good with the gifts you are given.

Erin Flynn, Engineering '22

Reminder: day of abstinence

March 19th - Solemnity of Saint Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16

Psalms 89:2-5, 27 and 29

Roman 4:13, 16-18, 22

Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a

Do not be afraid, God wants to fulfill His promises through us.

“Do not be afraid.” God told Mary “do not be afraid” at the Annunciation when God asked Mary to be Jesus’ mother. In today’s Gospel, God also tells Joseph “do not be afraid” to be Mary’s husband and Jesus’ foster father. God asked both Joseph and Mary to have faith in Him and, in turn, God entrusted Mary and Joseph with His Son, Jesus.

God is also telling us “do not be afraid” of what He asks of us! God asks us to courageously walk in faith with Him, to trust in His Holy Will.

What is something God has been asking of me? What is something I can do to work toward answering God’s call?

You don’t have to do this alone! Rely on God. Ask the Angels and Saints for their intercessions. Call on us, the children of God.

“Lord grant that I may always allow myself to be guided by You, always follow your plans, and perfectly accomplish your holy will. Grant that in all things, great and small, today and all the days of

my life, I may do whatever You may desire of me. Help me to respond to the slightest promptings of your grace, so that I may be your trustworthy instrument. May your will be done in time and eternity, by me, in me, and through me. Amen.” -St. Therese of Lisieux

St. Joseph pray for us!

Lauren Chacón, MSW Candidate ‘23

March 20th – Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15

Psalms 103:1-4, 6-8, 11

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

Luke 13:1-9

In today's reading, God reveals himself to Moses, and hence the Israelites, by means of the miraculous burning bush. I often assume that because Moses and the Israelites were able to witness such a miraculous phenomenon, it must have been easy for them to believe and trust in God. After all, if I witnessed a miracle, would I feel obligated to believe the cause of the miracle - God. However, as we see later in the reading, the Israelites still consistently sin against God despite His revelation, and yet, God always remains with his people. The fact that God remained with his people even when they rejected his miracles and sinned against his commandments provides me with great hope for a renewed faith in God. As the responsorial hymn reminds us, "The Lord is Kind and merciful", and in the Gospel, Jesus demonstrates through the Parable of the Fig Tree that God will continue to care and tend to us even if we are not being fruitful. Though I might not have witnessed God's revelation by means of a burning bush, and it might therefore be harder for me to commit to my faith without material or miraculous proof of its existence, I do have God on my side, caring for me and waiting for me to grow in my faith like the fig tree.

Antoinette Manteau, Arts & Sciences '25

March 21st

2 Kings 5:1-15ab

Psalms 42:2-3; 43:3-4

Luke 4:24-30

Naaman the Syrian is a representation of a great message from God. Reading 2 Kings 5, I am instantly made to question. Why do bad things like disease happen to people of good character? Naaman did great things for his master and was well respected, but he still became a leper. Does God expect us to understand when bad things happen? In the case of Naaman, God did not. I read this and think to myself that it is okay to be unhappy with the outcome or to be suspicious of the methods God uses. We are only human and could not achieve the knowledge of how and why God acts without hindsight. Faith in God is what is important, and reluctance and faith go hand in hand. Naaman did not understand why the river he was told to wash in was any more useful for his leprosy than the rivers of his native land. He prepared to go home underwhelmed by the prophet's instruction. The hubris we carry can do this and destroy us. We must remember we came prepared to encounter mystery and should not reject mystery despite being shrouded in the mundane. Being reminded of this human fallacy saved Naaman from leprosy, just as it can save us.

Tanner Smith, Arts & Sciences '24

March 22nd

Daniel 3:25, 34-43

Psalms 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc, 8-9

Matthew 18:21-35

We complete three weeks of Lent today. Easter still is a long way off, but, for me, this week tends to be about the time I start getting into the “rhythm” of Lent. If I’ve given up something, I’ve just about stopped missing it. If I’ve taken on a new practice, by now it’s almost become part of my routine. So, what have you adjusted to? Or did you adjust? There was a time in my life when I’d plan to do borderline heroic things during Lent — like setting aside unrealistic amounts of time for prayer or trying to give up certain foods that I really liked — but often those efforts lasted only a few days. Sometimes, by Day 21, I’d find that, for all practical purposes, my Lenten efforts were over. That’s why one year for Lent, I didn’t give up candy or beer, but instead I gave up trying to do those borderline heroic things. Small, incremental changes are much more likely to work for me anyway. It’s like studying. It works better to do the reading assignments a chapter at a time than it does to try to read five chapters the night before an exam. For me, Lent has become a time to make small, incremental changes that can have a big impact on my life. But in today’s gospel, I almost feel like Jesus is calling me back to those borderline heroic things I used to attempt. How many times should I forgive people? Jesus tells Peter to forgive 77 times. Personally, I need to work on doing it **once**. And you know that the number seven is arguably the most important number in Scripture. In the part of the ancient world where Jesus lived, the number seven symbolized totality, completeness,

perfection. So, when Peter asks whether he should forgive seven times, he is perhaps whether it's necessary to forgive completely and totally, or whether an occasional grudge might be okay. That already sounds pretty hard, but Jesus says it's not enough. Forgiveness should be limitless: "not seven times but 77 times." So instead of worrying about what I eat or adding time for extra prayer, maybe during the next few weeks this Lent Jesus is calling me to forgive. That might mean counting to ten rather than laying on the horn when a car cuts me off in traffic; telling a friend or family member that although something they said made me feel bad, we're still friends, and I forgive them; or maybe it means easing up on myself about some stupid thing I keep doing. You know, forgiveness is important, for us and for others. Next Tuesday (March 29th), the CSC will hold our annual Confession Marathon. That might be a good time for all of us to get the "forgiveness train" rolling, to let Jesus forgive us completely so that we can follow his command to forgive others the same way.

Jim Dryden, Deacon

March 23rd

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9

Psalm 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20

Matthew 5:17-19

The readings today focus on the law of the Lord. Oftentimes when we hear the word “law” we think of harsh rules that restrict us, we think of limits and *can't*s. For others, laws and rules are something to cling to as a means of structure. For the Jews listening to Jesus, I can only imagine they were divided between desperately wanting to maintain their centuries long traditions and hundreds of laws, and hoping Jesus was the Messiah that would be a strong military leader, conquering their enemies and potentially abolishing their former laws since they wouldn't need them anymore. Both of these groups of people, in a way, were disappointed. When we look at the law in these ways, when Jesus said “I have come not to abolish but to fulfill” it doesn't make much sense to us. But God's laws are special, they are not there to limit us but to protect us from sin and darkness that chains and limits us. God's law brings us closer to God's grace which comes with the freedoms of truth, love, mercy, and wisdom. Therefore, when Jesus says he has come to fulfill the law, he has come to bring us the ultimate freedom: the freedom of God's forgiveness for our sins as well as his illuminating example for how we are to live our lives as God's children. How are you being chained down by sin? And how can you better live in God's law and love?

Emily Swoboda, Arts & Sciences '25

March 24th

Jeremiah 7:23-28

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9

Luke 11:14-23

The Gospel says, “whoever does not gather with me scatters.”

Many of us in contemporary society bend the word of God in order to justify our actions. We often take the word lightly or are influenced to believe that slightly veering off course wouldn't hurt. We turn a blind eye to God, subconsciously or deliberately listening to our temptations. We sometimes believe that we know what's better for ourselves than God does. However, as these thoughts are “against” Him, we tend to lose ourselves in the long-run, or “scatter.” Intertwined with the hardship and pain brought by culture, the human mind is in a constant battle; we chase an idealized state of “happiness” that never truly lasts. We can find peace by listening to and trusting the word of God. What we may deem most valuable in our lives only holds worth if it is under the word of God. God is the truth. God is freedom. Once you have the ability to choose God over whatever you are doing or want, that means you are free. You shouldn't want something to that point because that means you no longer own it, but it owns you.

“The voice of the Lord” provides a ground that is full of freedom, truth, and peace and should be let into our hearts.

Anna Zawistowski, Arts & Sciences '25

March 25th - Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10

Psalm 40:7-11

Hebrews 10:4-10

Luke 1:26-38

When I pray the rosary on the Annunciation and meditate on the Joyful Mysteries, I can't help but also think of the Sorrowful Mysteries, the Passion we are journeying towards during Lent. At the Annunciation, Mary responds, at first with confusion and worry, but then with a joyful and eager fiat. Brilliant glory overtakes the scene. The deepest longings of hearts are set to be fulfilled when Emmanuel (God-with-us!) enters human form. But we are still in Lent, and my thoughts are still guided toward the costs of this life-pouring-out love. At the Agony in the Garden, all is weight and confusion. There are tears of sweat and blood as ragged hours drag by before decisions and actions are undertaken. Duty is resolved to be done. It is willing, but not easy, and by no means light.

The Annunciation has God proclaiming, "Here I am to love you, and I want desperately to be yours. Please choose me!" The Agony in the Garden has God barely breathing, heaving His words, "Is it time to take on this pain? Is there another way? Let it be done to me. Not as I will, but as you will."

As different as these scenes may seem, both are the love of a God who finally gets to save us, in our time and through our events. He came joyfully knowing he would suffer. He suffered in order that He might always come bearing joy. The Annunciation was a normal

day that ended with a fundamental, wonderful change in the world, a miracle that commenced with a word, with an open and willing heart. The Agony in the Garden began a change in the world, too, requiring a willing, steadfast love, well-prepared and resolved to journey towards Calvary.

Mary's yes allowed Jesus his yes. Jesus' yes allowed Mary's yes to carry the immeasurable value that it does and that we celebrate today. In all the unanticipated joys and unanticipated pains that accompany our decisions in life, how are we called, in our own space and time, to say, "Here I am Lord; I come to do your will"?

Maria Schmeer, Arts & Sciences '22

Reminder: day of abstinence

March 26th

Hosea 6:1-6

Psalms 51:3-4, 18-21ab

Luke 18:9-14

These passages speak to the immense love God has for us. They speak of God always being there for us always, especially in times of distress. He is not just always there for us, he wants to be, he never wants us to face things alone. The passages made me realize even more how easy it is to follow God. All he wants of us is our love and belief in him. Not only that he doesn't get angry with us when we fall short on that, or when we may be at a lower point in our faith journey. He understands that faith is a journey that comes with ups and downs, and it's not easy to always have the best faith. I find these passages really comforting and reassuring. It's comforting to know that even if we fall into lows in our faith journey God will still be there for us. He will be there to help us through all trials in our life and remind us of his love for us.

Lauren Renna, Arts & Sciences '23

March 27th – Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday)

Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

Psalm 34:2-7

2nd Corinthians 5:17-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

The prodigal son returns. This story is easily one of the most iconic forgiveness/resurrection stories in the bible, with the lost son being welcomed back to his father with a feast. Despite who the story is named after, I would argue that this story is not about the son or the father but, in fact, the brother. To pick this all apart, we shall begin by looking at how the story is presented.

Jesus is drawing taxpayers and sinners alike to himself and, upon seeing this, the scribes and Pharisees begin to complain and abhor the manner in which Jesus is welcoming everyone. Jesus, ever the sharp one, notices their qualms and presents them with the story we all know. This means that the scribes and the Pharisees are the target audience here, and the ones whom Jesus wishes to share his lesson with. What might that lesson be, you ask? Why, the very same one that the Father shares with the brother.

“My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.”

The father says that “we” must celebrate and rejoice. There is a need for joy and rightfully so. Imagine a time that a close friend or relative was in a perilous position whether that be for their actual

life, or job, or anything. Then, out of the dark clouds and dense stress, you find out everything will be ok, and your heart is filled with immense joy and relief. Yes! There is a need for joy in these situations, and this is what the father is attempting to convey to the brother.

So there is this need for joy, but why? I would argue that the first line of this passage answers that question loud and clear.

“Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus”

There is something about Jesus that is *drawing* people together, and I believe that thing to be joy. It is through joy that we can lift up both ourselves and those around us. Yet, despite the power of joy, the brother and Pharisees, through their jealousy, would see this joy used as a divisive tool. There are already too many things in this world that pull us apart, we cannot afford to turn the gift of joy into anything but the life giving essence that it is. When we are able to move past our own jealousy and share in others joy, that is when we can truly become united with each other.

Noah Maguigad, Engineering '23

March 28th

Isaiah 65:17-21

Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b

John 4:43-54

Today's first reading promises a "new heavens and a new earth," the perfect world that will come at the end of time. This world, the reading tells us, will be full of joy and longevity, with no memories of past suffering. The Psalm focuses on praising God for saving us and making this promise. Having been told of the future described in the first reading, why does it sometimes feel so hard to adopt the Psalms' joyous attitude of praise? I think Jesus answers this question for us in the Gospel, when He says that "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." Clearly the royal official had some belief in Jesus before his son was healed—why else would he be asking for His help in the first place? The passage even tells us that he believed Christ's assurances and left satisfied. But like doubting Thomas, only after he hears the news from his slaves does the Gospel say that he and his household "come to believe." He had some faith before, but seeing God's gifts for himself is what set it on fire. It can be hard for us to live with the joy of the Psalm because we want to see God's blessings for ourselves. We may have to look for them more intentionally than the royal official, but with some reflection, we can identify ways God blesses us, and grow our faith in the larger blessings to come.

William Carter, Arts & Sciences '23

**Confession Marathon tomorrow
3pm-midnight @ CSC**

March 29th

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12

Psalms 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9

John 5:1-16

In today's Gospel, the sick man tries entering the water, but has no one to help put him in. He tells Jesus that every time he tries, someone steps ahead. In this instance, he's not asking for Christ as God to help him, but for the help of a fellow man. Similarly, we need others, yet we also need Christ, and others to bring us closer to Christ. Faith is relational. If we can't help others in times of need, we're not acting in the imitation of Christ, as we are called to do. After meeting the man, Jesus asks an important question, "do you want to be well?" Of course, everybody wants to be well. There are times when our bodies and minds aren't doing what they should be. It's frustrating. As anyone of human nature would be, the man is disheartened and desperate. It can be difficult to accept that you struggle with things that you feel come easily to others. However, other people's journeys in acceptance of their ailments or their relationships with God, should not affect our individual relationships with either. When Jesus tells the man "you are well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse may happen to you," it's implied that the man's sickness was caused by sin. This religious-moral model of sickness and disability which blames sin as cause of illness is hard for many of us today to accept. It's difficult to apply what we know now about medical conditions to Jesus' time. However, one thing remains true—we experience pain and sickness because we are human—and God desires to heal us, no matter which form our pain takes: emotional or physical. In full

humanity, the man bares himself to Christ: imperfections and all. In his mercy, Christ heals him as he has the power to heal each of us. This Lenten season, let us allow ourselves to accept the state of our humanity like the sick man, listen to Christ, and strive to be more like Him, who gave His life so that we may experience complete healing through eternity with Him.

Caroline Fesler, Sam Fox '24

**Confession Marathon today
3pm-midnight @ CSC**

March 30th

Isaiah 49:8-15

Psalm 145:8-9, 13cd-13, 17-18

John 5:17-30

The Lenten season is centered around the great scandal of Christian belief: the death of God. This core belief, that God incarnate died, confounds all conceptions of God. How can the Giver of Life, the source of all goodness yield under the corruption of death? In pursuit of an answer to this question, another question arises. Why did God die? Today's reading offers us some insight into this question. The Gospel repeatedly refers to people passing from "death to life". This repetition reveals the multiple meanings of the phrase. First, this phrase refers to our hope of resurrection, of not only a spiritual life after death, but a fully human, both spiritual and corporeal, life in heaven. This phrase further refers to the power of the Gospel to help us realize what it really means to live. We, like those who have heard and experienced the Gospel throughout history, experience the Word as a life-affirming message, calling us out of the haze of apathy and towards a life of love. In this sense, death is not confined to the cemeteries or crematoria, but exists in our hearts. As we pass from death into life, we naturally ask what this new life looks like. The death of Jesus answers this question, and serves as both example and consolation as we seek to live our own lives of love.

Zachary Joseph, Arts & Sciences '25

March 31st

Exodus 32:7-14

Psalms 106:19-23

John 5:31-47

Have you ever put something on a really high shelf, then tried to get it down later, only to find that you can barely reach it and if you can it's going to make a mess?

In our first reading today, there is talk of the golden calf. Yeah, I know. You've heard the story. But just take a moment to sit with it. What is your golden calf? The one thing you put too high on the shelf?

Maybe it's sex. Maybe it's overeating or undereating. Maybe it's lazy time. Who knows?! Maybe you really love jellybeans and they get in the way of you worshiping God.

I just want you to know you're not alone. We all want to use that top shelf space. But maybe that top shelf is reserved for something greater than an object. For a God we need to learn how to love better. So that way we don't make a mess every time we pull that golden calf down.

Put God in that space. Right now. Give it a try.

Kelsey van Dyken, Intern Alum

April 1st

Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22

Psalms 34: 17-21, 23

John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

How do you react when someone laughs at you or criticizes you for your faith? Do people even still do that nowadays? I guess I don't have people wanting to kill me like Jesus did. However, it is not that uncommon for non-religious people to visibly be caught off guard and make judgements when faith is mentioned around them. Now, many non-religious people do handle this estrangement with understanding and compassion. But that is just even more fodder for the tension that builds up when people don't act so politely.

So, what happens? Do you react by boasting about your faith and knowledge? Do you get defensive and lash out? Speaking for myself, I tend to avoid conflict whenever possible, so these reactions aren't so common for me, but that's not to say I am off the hook. I think a common reaction for me and for some of all of us is to give judgment back. Perhaps I become the one who sees the other person as "different", or I bestow upon myself a false sense of superiority. This is something I do that slips under my own nose sometimes. The readings today are a great reminder to be conscious of how we act in these moments. Instead of turning our focus towards validating ourselves or tearing down the other person, it is better to turn our focus to God. Compare ourselves to God, and we can realize what person we must aim to be. Then also compare others to God, and realize we are not so different from them after all.

Will Giffen, Engineering '24

Reminder: day of abstinence

April 2nd

Jeremiah 11:18-20

Psalms 7:2-3, 9b-12

John 7:40-53

I noticed throughout the readings that they offered guidance on how to approach the judgment of others. The first reading illustrated the reliance of putting our trust in God to handle judgements as Jeremiah knew that others were plotting on his downfall, but instead of taking matters into his own hands he trusted God to handle the distribution of vengeance, and finding refuge in God to handle judgment during our times of need appears frequently to establish our connection with Him being an escape from the dangerous thoughts which can often be detrimental for us. Finally, the Gospel reading from today establishes that we must not put judgment on others based on others assumptions of them.

As a person who struggles with the idea of not judging others, I feel as if the readings offer guidance in leaving the idea of judgment to God which then lessens the load for myself. Times often come up where I feel attacked by others, but often I believe the best way to counteract these attacks is through imposing judgment on them. Judgment for us all will always be subjective, looking different to all of us depending on the situation. However, God will always have an objective interpretation of the situation, and thus judgment should be left to him as he knows what's best for us. We must not burden ourselves with the stress of judging others who hurt us, but instead we must trust that God has our back and we must persevere without passing judgment which can hurt the other person.

Juan Sanchez, Arts & Sciences '25

April 3rd – Fifth Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126:1-6

Philippians 3:8-14

John 8:1-11

The first passage speaks to me specifically through the lines describing how God “opens a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters” because our faith helps us get through difficult times when it often seems there is no way out. The tests God gives us through the fluid “mighty waters” of life allow us to find our own paths through the storm, with the guidance of our faith and the love we share with each other. The passage also says “in the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers” which to me represents how God will show us the way through hardship, but we must trust in Him and in ourselves to follow that path. It has become increasingly clear to me that believing in God is an active choice, and that in order to follow the path God has set for me, I must question my faith and have a dynamic relationship with God so that I can keep going down that path one step at a time. No journey is ever linear, but to take the next step in your journey, you have to choose to keep marching. The second passage says “it is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it” which to me reinforces that our faith in God and in the Holy Spirit give us the strength to “continue our pursuits” because of the strength of our desires to become better people.

Sophie Paradi, Engineering '24

April 4th

Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62

Psalm 23:1-6

John 8:12-20

The reading made me think about how God is just. There are a lot of unjust and unfair moments in life, but as the passage states, God is all knowing and God will help if you are willing to ask. Also, the reading shows that no one is safe from God, and under God everyone is equal. The elders thought that they had more power over Susanna because of their status, but God showed that the abuse of power would not work under his watch. Lastly, the reading showed me that you have to live an honest and truthful life. Even under the threat, Susanna decided to be free of sins and live honestly without any guilt. Because she was honest, God saved her. The elders lied and caused sins, leading them to die.

Tim Chung, Arts & Sciences '24

April 5th

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 102: 2-3, 16-18, 19-21

John 8:21-30

“Jesus said to the Pharisees: I am going away and you will look for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come.”

As Jesus is persecuted for his words, he does not fear prejudice from the blind. The Pharisees believe they will defeat Jesus by making him flee, but Jesus speaks not of fleeing to a safer place. He goes to a higher one, one where the words of the Pharisees have no place not because they threaten its power but because they are contrary to its existence. Jesus appears in flesh and blood to the Pharisees, but his true existence is far beyond what they are capable of seeing. In their blissful ignorance they turned Jesus away, having taken his words as threats and defended themselves against those threats. Upon further inspection, they will come to realize those words as the breakers of their existential chains. In this their ignorant prior selves will fall away. They will die in their sin, as he says. The place where Jesus goes does not exist in the mind of the Pharisees. They are trapped in a fragile and shallow life, and only when they look inward to truly examine their existence can they follow Jesus to the land of salvation.

This can teach us that when we fail to examine ourselves we develop false-confidence in our beliefs. If we do not deeply interrogate our beliefs, both ourselves and others are dangerously left at the whim of actions which come from unquestioned preconceptions.

Matt Viola, Arts & Sciences 24

April 6th

Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95

(Psalm) Daniel 3:52-56

John 8:31-42

In today's reading, Jesus says "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." What a powerful message. Salvation does not come from material things, but from God. We must not let ourselves grow too preoccupied with luxuries and distractions. It is not our possessions, our goods nor our social status that will save us in the end. Rather, these things must be kept in check, for, as Jesus says, "everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin". This Lent, keep your eyes on the things that matter.

Walter Treat, Arts & Sciences '22

April 7th

Genesis 17: 3-9

Psalm 105:4-9

John 8:51-59

In the gospel reading, Jesus's words are met with scrutiny, doubt, and eventually stones. When asked, "Who do you make yourself out to be?" Jesus answered with humility and truth. Rather than paint his image full of glory, Jesus gave God the credit for the beauty that he possesses. God has woven this beauty into each of us before we were even born. To live out this beauty, this good, means that sometimes stones will be thrown at us. But we must follow Jesus's example. Jesus was said to have hid, but is that cowardly? No. In the face of doubt, He showed courage in knowing and declaring who He is.

It takes courage to know the good that is inside of you and live by that good, but you should be wary to not throw stones at others. "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts." When Jesus gave the Jews some pretty darn good advice, they chose to harden their hearts. Today we might not directly hear the word of God from the man Himself, but Jesus's love is in everyone. Even though we may not see eye-to-eye and understand each other at times, why should we doubt that there is good? Why should we harden our hearts?

Jenny Nguyen, Arts & Sciences '24

April 8th

Jeremiah 20:10-13

Psalm 18:2-7

John 10:31-42

We've all heard the common phrase: actions speak louder than words. In this passage, Jesus is suggesting just that. Jesus says that even if people refuse to believe in His words, they should accept His works. In other words, Jesus is saying, "Maybe you don't believe in me, but at least use your eyes and see the work of the Father being performed."

Jesus puts emphasis on His works and the implications they have for who He says He is. Do our actions hold the same weight? As Catholics, our faith calls us to love one another through our words and actions. This love should go beyond the walls of the chapel on Sundays and seep into every facet of our lives. Jesus asks us to see His works and know that they are the works of the Father; how are our works/actions seen by those around me? It is simple to say that "I believe in the Lord", but it is much harder to put these words into action every day and not just on Sundays. We must be invested in our actions and the impact they have on those around us, whether this be in social justice advocacy or kindness shown during lunch at the CSC. How is the Father working through you?

Gabi Napoli, MSW Candidate '23

Reminder: day of abstinence

April 9th

Ezekiel 37:21-28

Jeremiah 31:10-13

John 11:45-56

In the first passage, God says that he will unite the children of Israel and combine their two nations. This stood out to me because it shows how he is able to restore a nation and solve tremendous issues like this with such ease. All they need to do is accept him as their God and get rid of their sinful ways. This can be applied to anyone. If you believe in and follow God's teachings, good things will come to you. The responsorial psalm connects to the previous passage because God, like a shepherd, protects all of his followers. Anyone who follows his teachings will receive protection and happiness. The verse comes directly after the first reading. It says that anyone can start anew by casting away their crimes and following the Lord. In the final passage, the Pharisees hear about Jesus' miracles and want to kill him. They say that if they do not, the Romans will come and destroy their country. However, it seems to me that they are jealous. Because Jesus was converting their believers with his miracles they plotted to kill him just to maintain their declining power. All of these passages show God's ability and willingness to help anyone who believes in him. The first passage shows him restoring Israel simply for them accepting him. The second explains that God helps and protects all his followers. The third shows how anyone who follows the word of the Lord is welcomed. Lastly, the final passage depicts Jesus helping believers regardless of the fact he is no longer accepted in their town.

Aryel Rodriguez, Engineering '24

April 10th – Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-40

Isaiah 50:4-7

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

Philippians 2:6-11

Luke 22:14-23:56

Most Gospels we hear last three minutes and usually contain a single act or lesson of Jesus from which we should learn. This is not the case for Palm Sunday. Coming from Luke, the passage spans almost two chapters and three days of Jesus' life. Luke begins with the Last Supper and closes with laying Jesus in a tomb. Overall, it's a story quite often recited, beginning with the Last Supper and ending with Jesus' burial. I've decided to focus my reflection on the undoubtedly awkward conversation between Jesus and the Apostles at Passover. Imagining myself as one of the twelve, sitting down for dinner, I would expect a Seder like all others. But Jesus mentions something quite off putting: "One of you will betray me tonight." After offering his body and blood to you, he's getting out of hand. First, Jesus is talking about cannibalism, and now he wants to play a murder mystery game. The chaos that ensues can't be a product of the Messiah that brings peace and love to the world. Not hours later, I watch my savior get arrested, and think to myself, how can this be the same person who preached love? Luke begs us to consider Jesus' true role in the world. We think Jesus wanted to save the world by bringing everyone together, but He did the exact opposite. With this passage, Luke asks us to be world-shakers in our faith. He tells us, as Christ's followers, to set the world aflame.

Mason Leffler, Arts & Sciences '25

April 11th

Isaiah 42:1-7

Psalms 27:1-3, 13-14

John 12:1-11

“You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me”. This verse stood out to me as I was reading the gospel for today. I wonder what exactly Jesus meant in both parts of this statement. In, “you don’t always have me,” was Jesus referencing his nearing physical departure from Earth, or the time in between his crucifixion and his resurrection, or was his message a different one that I’m missing? The other half, “You always have the poor with you,” also left me with many questions. I wonder what is meant by “poor” here. Is it the poor of spirit, the poor of material goods and basic necessities, or a combination of both? When Jesus says that we will always have the poor with us, does that mean that poverty in some way will always inevitably exist because of our human condition? Is this a reality that Jesus was at terms with? What does this mean for us? Maybe it’s a reminder that our work as humans is never done and we will always be called to serve one another, no matter what. Maybe it’s a reminder to take time for prayer and reflection. Because there will always be people in need (including ourselves), our work and responsibility to one another is never-ending. Perhaps Jesus is highlighting the importance of taking time to grow closer with our faith and with our relationship to Him?

Clarissa Gaona Romero, Arts & Sciences ‘23

April 12th

Isaiah 49:1-6

Psalm 71:1-4a, 5-6ab, 15, 17

John 13:21-33, 36-38

Imagine being in the shoes of Peter: you tell Jesus, the all-loving savior of mankind, that you would sacrifice your life for him—but he doubts you. Even more, he tells you that, apart from having lied to him, that you will reject him and thus reject everything he stands for when you deny him.

What would you do as Peter? Would you continue to insist to Jesus that you would give your life for him? Would you concede to Jesus's prophecy?

I know, or at least feel it strongly in my heart, that the point isn't to give up: for Peter to accept that he will deny Jesus and simply live his life until that moment comes. So that means that we would have an obligation to tell Jesus he is wrong—despite knowing that he cannot be. So how do those two things work: how can you say that you will move an immovable object?

As Jesus knew that Peter would deny him, God knows that we will sin. We are imperfect beings, and to say otherwise is to fail to thank God for the free will he has given us. However, this in no way means that we have a free pass to sin as much as we want. And so again, how can we say we won't sin anymore even though we will, and how can Peter say that he won't deny Jesus even though he will? By believing it: working everyday to strengthen our faith and live as Jesus would want us to.

Erick Saucedo, Arts & Sciences '23

April 13th

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34

Matthew 26:14-25

In today's Gospel, Jesus was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver which can be estimated to around \$200 USD. I have always been puzzled by Judas Iscariot and his lack of loyalty. The money doesn't seem like enough to have truly bribed Judas. I see it more likely that Judas was bending to outward social pressures – maybe his friends or family saw Jesus as blasphemous. It is important to ask ourselves in what ways we bend to social pressure. Anytime we sacrifice our morals to fit in with others we betray our true selves and deny others the opportunity to know us authentically. Even gossiping about our friends is a form of betrayal.

Yet, I often think Judas becomes a scapegoat for the crucifixion. Even if Judas had stayed loyal to Jesus, Jesus would still have been arrested and sentenced to death. Maybe it would have taken an extra week to arrest Jesus, and we would celebrate his resurrection later in April, but it's not like Jesus was cowardly hiding from the Jewish priests and elders. Our human species is to blame for not accepting the Son of God. We collectively put to death a great teacher and philosopher because we disagreed with him. In this Lenten Season let us open our minds to accept new ideas and become more empathetic humans.

Josh Sturgell, Engineering '23

April 14th – Holy Thursday

7pm Mass @ CSC followed by Adoration until midnight

Mass of Chrism

Isaiah 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9

Psalms 89:21-22, 25, 27

Revelation 1:5-8

Luke 4:16-21

Mass of the Lord's Supper

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16bc,

17-18

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-15

This passage is special because it takes place the night before Jesus is crucified. He is with his closest friends having dinner while he knows what is to come in just a few hours. The oblivious disciples are surprised when Jesus stops the supper to wash their feet. However, this is not just a simple action; Jesus is teaching an important lesson. In this Gospel, Jesus washes the feet of his Apostles which is showing them that he is a humble servant much like them. This is a significant action especially right before his death because it reminds us of Jesus's humanity. Additionally, Jesus tells the Apostles to continue this action by washing the feet of others as they go about on their own journeys. This is a reminder to remain humble and serve everyone. Jesus wanted the disciples (and now us) to go out and help those in need of service and love. The central message of Jesus's life was to love all, and this night he continues this message and prompts his disciples to continue it as well.

Kelsey Hudson, 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 is typically celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica on Holy Thursday here in St. Louis and all are welcome to attend this ancient tradition.

*View the website for information on Mass time

April 15th – Good Friday
7pm Service @ CSC

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

John 18:1-19:42

On this Good Friday, we are reminded of the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made for our sins. By enduring unimaginable pain and suffering on the cross, Jesus shows us His great love for each one of us. He willingly entered into the chaos and brokenness of our world and fully trusted the Father's will to transform his suffering. The author of the Hebrews tells us that "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). Even in the midst of our troubling world today, God knows our struggles and invites us to bring our own sufferings and unite them to Him. The Hebrews author continues by encouraging us to "confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help" (Heb 4:16). There is nothing too heavy or out of reach for God to restore.

As we reflect on the meaning of this significant day, may we always be reminded of the great mercy and compassion of our God. May we allow Him to enter into the mess of our lives and redeem us, for He loves us more deeply than we could ever imagine. Let us look to the cross

Megan Loveland, OTD/s '24

Reminder: day of fasting and abstinence

April 16th – Holy Saturday

7:30pm Mass @ CSC

Genesis 1:1-2:2 or 1:1, 26-31a

Genesis 22:1-18 or 22:1-2, 9a, 0-13, 15-18

Exodus 14:15-15:1

Isaiah 54:5-14

Isaiah 55:1-11

Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4

Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28

Romans 6:3-11

Lk 24:1-12

“Oh love, oh charity beyond all telling, to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

Oh truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the death of Christ!

Oh happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer.”

This is an excerpt from the Exsultet, the beautiful song sung by the priest or choir at every Easter Vigil Mass. I specifically chose this chunk because I feel that it does the best job of highlighting the importance and beauty of this night.

This is the night that Christ rose from the underworld, destroying sin and death’s grasp on humankind.

This is the night that Christ displays His divinity most prominently through His humanity. It was necessary that Jesus die so that our sinfulness could die. However, what dominion could death have over God, who gives life to all things? Death could not hold Christ

and so by His death and Resurrection our human nature is expiated and raised to Heaven with Him.

“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” 1 Corinthians 15:55

Christ is risen from the dead!

Zane Watson, Engineering '24

April 17th – Easter Sunday

9:30am & 11:30am Mass @ CSC

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Colossians 3:1-4 or First Corinthians 5:6b-8

John 20:1-9 or Lk 24:1-12 or Luke 24: 13-35

Victory has come! Jesus has conquered death, and the news spreads. Let the excitement fill you! Imagine yourself finding the empty tomb and your reaction to it. Or imagine yourself on the road to Emmaus fleeing Jerusalem and feeling the fear and heartbreak following the Crucifixion. Follow the feelings of those despairing lows to the astonished and joyous highs of the disciples as they realize Jesus is alive again. Feel these emotions as you remember that Jesus is alive! Let it animate you and bring you to new life. Today hold the joy of the Resurrection in you and let it spread from you to others. Reflect on what it means to live after the Resurrection. How does the knowledge and joy of what He has done for us change your life? Does it change your goals, the way you think about yourself, or how you treat others? Does it change everything? Because it should. Because through Christ, we are saved from death. We talk about how Christ is our savior, but do we live as saved people? Do we live as people who have our Lord alive and present in our lives? Celebrate today with family and friends and give praise to God. Remember what today means because, through Christ, we too can live again.

Kane Koubsky, Business '21

Christ is risen! What now?

If you made it this far through the book, these past 40 days of Lent have surely been full of some seeking and sacrifice. Through meditation and reflection, we have opened our minds and our hearts to God's word. I hope that in this season of Lent, you allowed the Holy Spirit to speak to you just as these students allowed the Holy Spirit to speak to them. May a deeper understanding of the sorrow and mystery of Jesus's death and resurrection help you to live out your faith and invite others to join you on your way. May you continue to take up your crosses and live life seeking redemption and true joy.

Jenny Nguyen, 2021 CSU Spiritual Chair

