

LENT



Welcome

Our community of students, faculty, and staff are excited to publish our eighth book of Lenten reflections. Our hope is that Benedictine can grow together this Lenten season in our love for God and each other. As you pick up this book each day, know you are united in prayer with the rest of our Christian community on campus, in Lisle and in Mesa. Listen to the voice of God speaking to you from the diverse and unified Body of Christ. Let this book, and with it God and Benedictine, travel with you on your Lenten journey.

All readings can be found by date on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website, www.usccb.org

Cover art by Jeanette Villegas '24

Lenten Opportunities on Campus

Mass: Sundays 4:30p | Weekdays 12:20p, meal to follow

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: available before all Masses

Social Justice Lunches: 12p Fridays, Goodwin 2nd floor

Lectio Divina for faculty and staff: 9a Fridays, St. Benedict Chapel

Stations of the Cross: March 26th 12:30p, St. Benedict Chapel

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:: March 28th 2-4:00p, St. Benedict Chapel

Triduum at St. Procopius Abbey:

Holy Thursday: 7:30p | Good Friday 3:00p

Easter Vigil 8:00p | Easter 11:00a

Triduum at Sacred Heart Monastery:

Holy Thursday: 7:00p | Good Friday 3:00p | Tenebrae 6:30p

Easter Vigil 8:00p | Easter 10:00a



Benedictine University
Campus Ministry

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Ash Wednesday | February 14, 2024

[Joel 2:12-18](#)

[Psalms 51:3-14](#)

[2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2](#)

[Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18](#)

Even now, says the LORD,
return to me with your whole heart,
with fasting, and weeping, and mourning;
Rend your hearts, not your garments,
and return to the LORD, your God.
For gracious and merciful is he,
slow to anger, rich in kindness,
and relenting in punishment.
Perhaps he will again relent
and leave behind him a blessing,
Offerings and libations
for the LORD, your God... Joel 2:12-18

“Rend your hearts, not your garments.” Sometimes I spend too much time and effort preparing elaborate “to do” and “to give up” lists for Lent. Could I eat vegetarian for 40 days? Could I make room in my busy schedule to spend 10 minutes every single morning meditating on scripture? Six weeks is a long time, and to be honest, I usually have a hard time fulfilling my Lenten goals. The road to Easter is paved with good intentions, but....why? Why am I doing all this? To be a Lenten hero? To prove to myself that I have will power? To get spiritually healthy but maybe also lose a little weight in the process? With all my focus on the garments, have I forgotten my heart? The Prophet Joel says that the Lord is asking us to “rend our hearts,” or focus on the interior. And note the word “rend” here, meaning to split or tear open forcefully. Ask yourself: what can I do this Lent that will rip open my heart and transform me, such that I can get back on the path to God? My prayer for you is that when you’re coming up with your Lenten lists, you will focus on doing only those things (or avoiding those things) that will truly crack open the hard crust of your heart, to let in the Lord’s love and mercy, if only just a little.

Dr. Rita George-Tvrtković
Professor, Theology, Lisle Campus

Thursday after Ash Wednesday | February 15, 2024

[Deuteronomy 30:15-20](#)

[Psalm 1:1-6](#)

[Luke 9:22-25](#)

The reading, psalm, and gospel for February 15th is one that at first may seem like a stern warning and a sign that God hates those who do not seek him. It seems to a novice reader that the Father is looking to hand out punishments and to cast those who do not praise him to eternal damnation. However, this is not the message of this day's reading, psalm, and gospel. God has given us free will and what we decide to do with it is our choice. We decide whether to stay close to him or stray off like a lost lamb. But just as a Shepherd will seek out his lost sheep, God tells us there is always a way back. He says in the verse before the gospel, "Repent, says the Lord; the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." We have the choice to bear our own cross each day. Our reward for doing so is eternal life with the Father in Heaven. In these trying times it is easy to fall into habit of praising false gods and stray from the flock. I think it is easy for us to dismiss God entirely now; science, technology, and even artificial intelligence try to prove there is no maker; no creator. This evidence is not false but misunderstood. God is the one who gave us the power to create. Our creations do not sit above him. Nor do we. The most beautiful thing about our Church is the fact that we understand that as long as you seek God and wish to truthfully repent for the sins in which you brought upon yourself, God will answer your call for forgiveness and allow you to see the beauty of his creation. If you are asked by the father "Who shall I send?" reply, "Here I am Father; Send me". For even those who live outside the Lord their entire lives can still find God before the end. These readings teach us that if one truly wishes to bare his cross, no matter the sin, God shall lift it from you on the day in which you meet him.

Jonathon Reid '24

Lisle Campus

Friday after Ash Wednesday | February 16, 2024

[Isaiah 58:1-9A](#)

[Psalm 51:3-6, 18-19](#)

[Matthew 9:14-15](#)

"This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: Releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the

naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.”

Fasting. Oh no, not that time of the year again. Should I give up coffee? (Nope, Mama needs her morning caffeine!) Cheese? (Then what would I enjoy with my glass of wine?) Wine? (Reverse that cheese response.) Or maybe it's about abstaining from something unrelated to food, like social media or watching TV? Would that be more acceptable in God's eyes?

Growing up Catholic, the words fasting and Lent were enough to stir anxiety in me and my fellow practicing pals, because I honestly never knew what I was supposed to give up and, of equal importance, why. Is the act of fasting merely about giving something up because conceivably God is taking notes and will be pleased if I do ... and not pleased if I don't? If I fast, does that give me permission to go about my life in the same way (only a bit hungrier and more distracted) because that's what I am supposed to do?

I think Isaiah 58:1-9a is a critical passage to examine because it serves as a vehicle for reflecting on what fasting means from a true biblical sense ... giving something up in order to give full focus on God. The act of fasting is essentially less about focusing attention on items we choose to forego (snacks, electronics) and more about focusing attention on what really matters when we make those sacrifices. When we fast, we make a conscious decision to become more vigilant about how we live in other areas of our lives. How we speak. How we treat others. How we conduct ourselves at home or in public.

Perhaps what God is asking us to do every Lent (although fewer trips to Starbucks wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing for my coffee addiction) is to better align our priorities with God. It's not about going through the motions and fasting from what we enjoy this season without doing a bit of soul-searching. We're not giving up something in order to attain cravings, become hangry, and then trigger resentment around the people we love. We're not going to attain gold stars from God simply because we succeeded in passing up favorite indulgences for forty days. But if temporary hunger from forbidden foods causes us to stop and consider people in this world who are hungry for spirituality (and need our daily prayers), or our temporary void from technology causes us to assist people in this world who are void of hope (and need our words of encouragement), then we are using fasting as a reflective process that draws us closer to a spiritual connection with Him. And, hopefully, that spiritual connection continues long after the season of Lent and ignites a more compassionate part of our daily lives.

Michelle Rollins

Director of Alumni Relations, Lisle Campus

Saturday after Ash Wednesday | February 17, 2024

[Isaiah 58:9B-14](#)

[Psalms 86:1-6](#)

[Luke 5:27-32](#)

I believe in the power of prayers.

My six siblings and I were raised in the Church. Every Sunday, we all trooped to the Church to hear Mass as a family. We were all sent to Catholic schools for our elementary education.

But it was during my young adulthood that I slowly renewed and strengthened my faith and became, I believe, a better follower of Christ.

*Incline your ear, O LORD; answer me,
for I am afflicted and poor.*

*Keep my life, for I am devoted to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.*

And my faith has served me well. I started a new job when I was about 22, and I was beset with the typical worries of a young person. I was inspired by some of my coworkers who heard Mass almost every day at a nearby church. I found myself seeking solace and comfort in that church so often that eventually I had my wedding there. When my family and I moved to the US when I was 26, we were glad that a Catholic Church was near our apartment in Tallahassee, Florida. Being new in America, it was a source of great comfort for us to find the same familiar traditions of the Catholic Church in our new home. That was repeated when we moved to Birmingham, Alabama and then to Phoenix, Arizona.

I prayed for good friends when I became severely lonely and homesick, and God gifted me with good friends that have remained by my side through all these years. I prayed for the approval of our green card and then for our US Citizenship, and God granted those fervent prayers. I prayed through during my profound grief over the death of my father, and I wasn't there by his bedside. I prayed that my daughters would do well in school, I prayed for the times when my husband had to seek for a new job, I prayed hard for my family's protection from Covid during the pandemic.

Always I prayed because I know God is always listening, and I have complete trust in Him.

Myra Carlos

Operations Coordinator, Mesa Campus

First Sunday of Lent | February 18, 2024

[Genesis 9:8-15](#)

[Psalms 25:4-9](#)

[1 Peter 3:18-22](#)

[Mark 1:12-15](#)

Today is the first Sunday of Lent, a period of 40 days where we commit to the Lord to become better and prepare for Easter. In today's readings, God asks us for faith, patience, and commitment.

Faith: The Gospel discusses the beginning of Jesus's journey through the desert. Throughout this long journey, Jesus was tempted by Satan in many ways, but He remained strong and faithful. Like Him, we must be faithful in the Lord's ways and believe our sacrifices will bring great things. We must accept that our lives are not ours and let God do His will because he has a great plan waiting for us.

Patience and commitment: These two values have come together since one can't exist without another. No doubt, Lent can become challenging; even life can be difficult. Today's readings teach us that we have to be patient, even if we're trying to sail through the storm or walk through a desert. We must have patience and trust the Lord's ways, for He will never have you go through it if he knew you couldn't overcome the challenge. After Lent, the storm, or finding our way out of the desert, we must commit to the Lord; let's show our gratitude, repent from our sins, and get involved. This way, we know the Lord is walking by our side when hardships come again.

This Lent, the Lord invites us to be faithful in His ways, have patience because we will get through hardships, and commit to the new life the Lord gave us.

Dana Lopez '25

Lisle Campus

Monday of the First Week of Lent | February 19, 2024

[Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18](#)

[Psalms 19:8-10, 15](#)

[Matthew 25:31-46](#)

During Lent we are asked to give up something or take something on for us to realize what Christ did for us during his 40 days in the desert. Today's readings speak to the Word of God and how through our obedience and reverence to his laws that we may see him in the world. For God loved us so that he sent his Only Son to bring us back to Him.

On many occasions in the history of scripture, God is seen to be giving us guidance, helping us to find the right path, in many ways giving us specific instructions on how to live, how to worship, how to be holy. During Lent, we must realize that during these 40 days, we are also in the desert, alone, being tempted by the Enemy, who wants us to stay from God and his laws and commandments, stray from a righteous way of life, abandoned all that is holy and scared.

Even Jesus, our Savior, was tempted by the Devil, Jesus the Son of Man, the only begotten son of God, was tempted by the Enemy. If our Christ was tempted during his time in the desert, his time wandering trying to find his way, then you've to be sure that the Enemy is tempting us, coaxing us, pulling us from God and from a life of value and dignity and reverence to a life of material gain, of jealousy and of hatred.

But, remember friends, God is among us and in all our actions we are judged, God offers us the great spiritual and heavenly gifts, the Eucharist, the Mass, and reconciliation. The Enemy offers us earthly things, he offers us nothing that we can take with us when we come to the day of judgement and face our maker.

So, beware the Enemy, who prowls the world seeking the ruination of souls, he who wishes to keep everyone from the very paradise he was evicted from. God wants us to be with Him, in Him, and for Him. He grants us the Holy Eucharist, the solemn Mass, and the great sacrament of reconciliation so that we may fill our cups with the Holy Spirit, honor and cherish his laws and obligations and purify our hearts from sin.

Michael McCarthy

Head Coach—Men's and Women's Rugby Club

Tuesday of the First Week of Lent | February 20, 2024

[Isaiah 55:10-11](#)

[Psalms 34:4-7, 16-19](#)

[Matthew 6:7-15](#)

In today's Gospel reading Jesus teaches us how to pray. This is the *only* time Jesus teaches us in a very literal way how to pray. Let us listen closely to what these words tell us.

Read this slowly:

“This is how you are to pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from

evil. “If you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.”

Now read it again, *slowly*.

May God’s will be done, not ours. Do we trust God enough to embrace this? May we experience heaven on earth. Do we work daily to manifest the glory of God in our everyday? Provide for us each day. Do we honor that in each moment of our day, all is gift? God invites us to trust in God *each* day. We are called to trust how and in what way God will provide us. Lastly, we see glimpses of where St. Benedict was inspired for his deep love of neighbor. We are to treat others, forgive others, serve others, not only as we would desire for ourselves, but how we would do so to God. Let us hold this prayer even more closely to our hearts this Lenten season. May the prayer that Jesus has taught us, become the rhythm in our soul.

Carrie Ankeny

Director of Campus Ministry, Lisle Campus

Wednesday of the First Week of Lent | February 21, 2024

[Jonah 3:1-10](#)

[Psalms 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19](#)

[Luke 11:29-32](#)

The scripture assigned to me was about the word of the Lord coming to Jonah a second time, directing him to go to Nineveh to announce the city was going to be destroyed. He trusted in the Lord and followed his command. The king of Nineveh believed this and in turn directed his people to put on sackcloth and fast, in hopes they would not die. God saw this and spared them.

In reflection on this reading and the psalm and gospel included, the key message centers on repentance based on the God-sent sign of Jonah. Sometimes it takes a sign for us to change our behavior. If I’m being honest, I’m not sure how I would react if someone who claimed to be speaking on behalf of God, and during that time, asked me to repent for my transgressions. The entire thought of it requires a great deal of trust and faith. It requires faith in one another and faith in the messenger. In the days we’ve been surrounded by lately, it seems we could all have a little more trust and faith in one another; though this is hard to come by for many reasons. In this Lenten season, may we reflect on our strengths and weaknesses, as we remember God’s place within us, and work to trust the messages we see in front of us.

Prayer: Lord, please instill a trust within us that allows us to

really know who you are. Please let this trust grow, as our relationship with you grows, over our years of life and beyond.

Jenny Jeschke
Associate Director of Admissions, Lisle Campus

Feast of the Chair of St. Peter | February 22, 2024

[1 Peter 5:1-4](#)

[Psalms 23:1-6](#)

[Matthew 16:13-19](#)

Today is the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter! The reading and Gospel for today correspond to the papacy (the position of pope) and its establishment by Jesus. The Gospel for today is a story some of us may know very well. In it, Jesus asks His disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” Simon responds, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus then tells Simon that this answer was not given to him through flesh and blood, but by God the Father. He then proclaims to Simon: “you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.” This is a huge moment. Not only does Jesus change Simon’s name to Peter, but He also announces the Church that He is building.

In the Old Testament, a name change meant a change in mission (think of Abram’s name being changed to Abraham). So the Simon to Peter transition means that there is a significant role change happening here. What is Peter’s new role? We translate his new name as “Peter”, but it can also be read as “Cephas”, which means “rock” in Aramaic. The name “Cephas” is translated to “Petros” in Greek (in English “Peter”). All that is to say that “Peter” means “rock”. Re-reading the passage from the Gospel makes it clear that Simon (now Peter) is the “rock” on which Jesus will build His Church. Okay, you say, Peter is the rock of the Church. What does that mean?

Peter became the leader of the early Church, given a specific role to “bind and loose”. Jesus endowed His Church and her leaders with authority, promising that the Holy Spirit would guide them. How does Peter act in this role? Well, we see his advice to his fellow Apostles in the first letter from Peter (which also happens to be the first reading for today), where he tells his fellow presbyters to tend God’s flock, not to lord their position over others, and to be examples to those they lead. He reminds them that “when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” Clearly, Peter recognizes the importance of his leadership role and the roles of his fellow Apostles. He also recognizes

the responsibility that has been given to him by Jesus. He further recognizes that, while he is leading the Church, it is Jesus who is the “chief Shepherd” and head of the Church. This papal role of leadership has been passed down from Peter to every pope in the Church’s history. Through apostolic succession, the papacy that Jesus has established has continued to the present day with Pope Francis. It amazing to think that, despite our faults, despite our sins, Jesus still entrusted His Church to us, promising that “the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.”

Sean Hancock ‘24
Lisle Campus

Friday of the First Week of Lent | February 23, 2024

[Ezekiel 18:21-28](#)

[Psalms 130:1-8](#)

[Matthew 5:20-26](#)

Redemption. Forgiveness. Reconciliation. These words immediately stuck with me after reading today’s prayers. The moment we ask for God for forgiveness, our past no longer matters, and we are embraced with love and forgiven immediately. However, God wants us to also reconcile with and forgive those who have wronged us and those who we have wronged just as effortlessly as how God has forgiven us.

However, that is something I struggle with, forgiving those who have wronged me. Why do I hold onto the hurt? If the person wants to be redeemed, why can’t I forgive immediately and embrace the renewed love? But what if the person doesn’t seek redemption, should I still forgive and release the hurt they have caused?

Lent is the season in which should show more love and compassion. And what is more loving than forgiveness? Life is too short for resentments, so let’s try a little harder this season to love more, care more and forgive more. I know I will.

Julie Meurer
Admissions Counselor-Graduate, Lisle Campus

Saturday of the First Week of Lent | February 24, 2024

[Deuteronomy 26:16-19](#)

[Psalms 119:1-8](#)

[Matthew 5:43-48](#)

We all wish to be in good favor with the Almighty, but we do not always wish to abide by the Almighty's decrees. Yet what is ironic is that the Almighty loves us anyway.

What is the cost for us to love our enemies? What is the cost for us to pray for those who persecute us? The Lord's decrees are like nature; they are organic. The voice of God inside us is pure and good, and it encourages us to be good. If and when we choose to hearken to that voice, we will be good. Responding in kind to God's voice gives us no choice but to be good. Its intensity ranges in decibels over time. Its logarithmic units rest upon a continuum that accompanies us and change as we change. Our inner voice that is God grows with us and will never die in us.

The essence of God's decrees is not authoritarian. Hence, we shall not be penalized for responding with tardiness. Arriving late to obeying the laws of the Lord, or to an understanding, shall not result in punishment from the Lord. Whenever we arrive is right on time, as it is better to come late and full-hearted than to arrive early and ignorant, or play-acting.

At first when we are dismayed by our enemies, can we next look into a mirror and think about those to whom we are the enemy? At first when we curse those who have persecuted us, can we next remember those we have persecuted? After all, the God blesses all of us, good and bad, with the sun and the rain (and under the same sky).

So again, what is the cost for us to love our enemies? What is the cost for us to pray for those who persecute us? What is the cost for us to turn from bad to good? **It is love and humility.** And when we have humbled ourselves to God's laws, we have become as close to perfect as we ever can be.

Dr. Julie Dockery
Chief Diversity Officer

Second Sunday of Lent | February 25, 2024

[Genesis 22:1-2, 9-18](#)

[Psalms 116:10, 15-19](#)

[Romans 8:31B-34](#)

[Mark 9:2-10](#)

The gospel episode of the Transfiguration has for centuries played a significant role in the Catholic imagination. Like other milestones in the life of Jesus, it constitutes an occasion when boundaries between worlds become blurred. Christoph Schönborn, editor of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, identifies it as one of the four

chief mysteries of the Christ event, in addition to Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter. More broadly, the Transfiguration functions in the mythic and ritual structure of the Catholic tradition as an opportunity to encounter the living presence of spiritual ancestors and the uncanny splendor of Jesus.

In devotional practice, the Transfiguration enjoys prominence as one of the five luminous mysteries of the rosary, along with the baptism of Jesus, the wedding at Cana, the proclamation of the reign of God, and the institution of the Eucharist. The Transfiguration also operates as a familiar theme in Catholic visual art. It even occupies space in Catholic geography, though Mount Tabor, a major pilgrimage site, is not mentioned by name in the text. Within Catholic belief and behavior, the Transfiguration represents both an unrepeatable event and a repeatable spiritual experience.

Commentaries echo these sentiments. The Transfiguration confirms church teaching regarding communion with Christ, prayerful insight into his identity, and ritual recreation of the mountaintop experience. No evidence suggests, however, that the radiance of this luminous mystery penetrates very deeply into the sensibilities of the vast majority of practitioners today. Karl Rahner's "everyday mysticism" remains one of the many roads less traveled.

Engaging understudied features of the passage helps to unleash the full force of the Transfiguration. Even the best commentators stumble over elements of the narrative, especially Peter's incomprehension of what he is saying. Virtually no examination considers the probability that the text points to an ecstatic nocturnal experience. Imagine a night in an isolated fierce landscape, complete with strange resplendence, visitors from beyond the veil, disembodied sounds, shifting shadows, sheer terror, and eerie silence. Read unfiltered, the Transfiguration portrays one stage of the journey into the mysteries of the spiritual life—a way defined by ascent, dark night, unknowing, and unexpected illumination.

Dr. Peter Huff
Chief Mission Officer

Monday of the Second Week of Lent | February 26, 2024

[Daniel 9:4B-10](#)

[Psalms 79:8-13](#)

[Luke 6:36-38](#)

We are grateful for the mercies our Heavenly Father bestows upon us every day. O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, and his mercy endures forever. In reflection of how we as mortal human beings

tend to judge others, I am grateful for the tender mercies that God bestows upon his children.

God has given each of us the spirit and the free agency to choose between good and evil enabling our spirits to either glorify him or not. To chose to live a life following the teachings and example of Jesus Christ nourishes our spirit to be potentially the light of the world as he was.

By being humble and keeping all the commandments, this helps to show our love for the eternal sacrifice that Jesus Christ gave to each and everyone.

What a comfort to know that God is merciful, he is the Alpha and the Omega. His forgiveness by repentance daily places us back on the covenant path to return with our merciful Lord. To quote Elder Dieter Uchtdorf, Apostle of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, “Just as the good shepherd finds his lost sheep, if you will only lift up your heart to the Savior of the world, he will find you.”

Lisa Sennyes

Executive Assistant to the President

Tuesday of the Second Week of Lent | February 27, 2024

[Isaiah 1:10, 16-20](#)

[Psalms 50:8-9, 16BC-17, 21, 23](#)

[Matthew 23:1-12](#)

“Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow”; “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” There is no mistake, no failure, no flaw that can separate you from the love of God. The love of God is not about us, it’s not about who we are or what we do. The love of God is about who he is alone as a person. No matter what we do or who we become, Jesus will continue to love us unconditionally no matter what. You are loved, you are meant to be, and you are cherished.

Jonathan Henderson ‘26

Lisle Campus

Wednesday of the Second Week of Lent | February 28,
2024

[Jeremiah 18:18-20](#)
[Psalms 31:5-6, 14-16](#)
[Matthew 20:17-28](#)

If the Son of Man did not come to be served and made it his work to serve those around Him, how can we not strive to do the same? The final thought of today's gospel has stayed with me. We have countless opportunities every single day to be of service. How lucky are we?! We get to serve our students, our fellow staff and faculty, our alumni and anyone who is a part of our Benedictine community. The Lenten season is the ideal time for all of us to do our best to focus on being more Christ like. For me, focusing on what I can do for others, instead of what others can do for me is the perfect way to try and be the best version of myself as I navigate the next few weeks of Lent. It is quite simple actually, and it's doable.

I was also happy to read and be reminded of Jesus' words from John 8:12, "I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life". Especially this time of year, when the days are long but not especially filled with (natural) light, it is important to remember that we will never be alone, nor experience true darkness as long as we acknowledge the light of God that is alive in our hearts. That is not a hard thing to do, but it can often be lost in the day to day tasks, responsibilities and activities that we often face. We are blessed by the fact that the light will always be there. What a gift! It is on us to acknowledge God's light and keep it burning as brightly as we can.

Jen Wildes

Head Women's Volleyball Coach, NCAA Compliance Officer, Lisle Campus

Thursday of the Second Week of Lent | February 29,
2024

[Jeremiah 17:5-10](#)
[Psalms 1:1-6](#)
[Luke 16:19-31](#)

From this reading, I gathered that those who believe in the Lord shall not have to worry or fear anything because the Lord will always be beside them, and those who do not believe will not experience all of the wonderful things that God blesses us with. In the reading, it quotes that "In the year of drought it shows no distress but still bears fruit" which means that no matter how many worries someone may have, the Lord

will always be there beside them. The more times I read this reading, the more it had me reflecting on my own life and on how I should have more faith that the Lord will take care of me, and whenever I am dealing with my struggles he will be there to guide me.

Maya Alcantar '27
Lisle Campus

Friday of the Second Week of Lent | March 1, 2024

[Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13A, 17B-28A](#)

[Psalms 105:16-21](#)

[Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46](#)

Although seemingly innocuous, the act of sending Joseph to check on his brothers signified Jacob's love and care for his son, even amidst the brewing animosity within the family.

Furthermore, Joseph's love for his brothers, despite the betrayal and hardship he endured at their hands, exemplifies the transformative power of forgiveness and compassion. When Joseph was eventually reunited with his brothers in Egypt, he was close to extending grace and mercy instead of seeking retribution. His ability to forgive and reconcile with his brothers, despite the pain they had caused him, serves as a testament to the depth of his love and strength of his character.

In Conclusion, the story of Joseph and his father's love is a timeless reminder of the enduring nature of familial bonds and the transformative power of love and forgiveness.

H. Charles Johnson
Assistant Professor, Business, Mesa Campus

Saturday of the Second Week of Lent | March 2, 2024

[Micah 7:14-15, 18-20](#)

[Psalms 103:1-4, 9-12](#)

[Luke 15:1-3, 11-32](#)

Reading the passages for this day of Lent, the main theme of these readings became evidently clear to me; God is overwhelmingly forgiving of his children. No matter the depth of our sins, our faith and repentance is all he needs to forgive us, time and time again, without fail. "As you have sworn to our fathers from days of old," God's mercy is a promise that he has kept throughout time no matter the number of humanity's mistakes that have occurred since (Micah 7:20). Why? Because he loves us with absolutely no conditions.

"Not according to our sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes" (Psalms 103:10).

It was this phrase, however, that struck me with what God's forgiveness truly means, and from my viewpoint, it does so by comparing God's mercy to ours. As humans, I believe that we are generally motivated to respond to others in the way they have treated us. This can be a good thing, such as when we return a kind act. But on the other hand, I think a frequently overlooked fault of ours is when we also view the opposite as just and fair. When someone has wronged us, too often we seek out revenge for what they did to us. This revenge can be as simple as a resentment that we hold against the person. Other times it can go as far as trying to return the deed. I have done this. You have done this. We all have done this at one point or another. We are human, and while we might know that it is not the better course of action, we give in and

we make mistakes. When someone calls us names, we return the name calling. When someone betrays us, we carry a grudge against them. We seem to have this tendency to view our world as a tit for tat situation.

But what does God do? As the phrase states, God does not judge us based on our sins or return our mistakes with punishment. God keeps his promise. Humankind has committed countless sins, but if God were to return them, the world would be a chaotic mess! Instead, He looks beyond our mistakes and loves us with relentless forgiveness.

So on this day of Lent, can we be inspired by this important lesson from God? Love is so much stronger a force than hate. I believe that hate can make a large impact on this world in various ways, but I also believe that to try and demonstrate just a fraction of God's love and mercy in return creates a much larger impact. How strange a concept this can seem in a world where we so often fight fire with fire; To return hate with the very opposite influence? But imagine how much better humanity would be for it, if we were only to try and be just that little more forgiving in our daily lives.

Marielle Vestuto-Langford '26
Lisle Campus

Sunday of the Third Week of Lent | March 3, 2024

[Exodus 20:1-17](#)

[Psalms 19:8-11](#)

[1 Corinthians 1:22-25](#)

[John 2:13-25](#)

"In those days, God delivered all these commandments." Ex 20:1

I remember growing up it often felt like the commandments were simply an exercise in memorization. The goal was to be able to recite the

commandments in order, word-for-word, and that was the measurement of if we “learned” them. Looking back, I feel that what may have served me better would have been a focus on teaching me how to use the Commandments to develop and in turn, strengthen my own personal guiding principles. These guiding principles frame our sense of the world around us and are what each of us uses to develop our sense of justice, honesty, righteousness, loyalty, fairness and so much more. And much like Jesus in the Gospel reading today, when our guiding principles are challenged, it invokes a reaction from us - often a strong one like Jesus in the temple that may be full of outrage and anger.

By identifying and understanding our own unique, guiding principles it provides us with an opportunity to reflect on how they were developed and what has shaped them over the years. I find that when I hear the ten commandments (or remember them from rote), it seems like every time a different one strikes a new nerve which pushes me to think about how the commandments align with my own guiding principles and how challenges to them propel me to react.

Like Jesus in the Gospel, do I respond with outrage when someone goes against someone I love or something I stand for? Do I speak out for someone who is being wrongly accused or bullied? Should I actively be finding ways to honor God outside of attending mass rather than passively reading about injustices online?

As we continue our Lenten journey, today’s readings may best provide us an opportunity to identify where the commandments align with our own personal, guiding principles or where they strike a nerve. Additionally, they may also serve to inspire us to reflect on times we feel challenged and try to understand how, like Jesus, we may be provoked to react to the world around us.

Kathy Chatman

Transfer Evaluation and Articulation Manager, Lisle Campus

Monday of the Third Week of Lent | March 4, 2024

[2 Kings 5:1-15AB](#)
[Psalm 42:2-3, 43:3-4](#)
[Luke 4:24-30](#)

In today’s reading from the Old Testament, Naaman’s story is told. Several aspects of the story stood out to me this time: 1) the suggestion to request healing comes from Naaman’s wife’s slave girl who was taken as a prisoner of war from Israel; 2) Israel’s king sees the request as an attack; and 3) Elisha proves himself as a prophet of Israel.

These aspects stood out to me in light of the current-day events in

Israel and Syria. The atrocities of war and violence by powerful governments and political ties personally lead me to lose faith in the prophets of the past. Millions of helpless innocent people have been displaced, killed, and/or lack basic human needs due to the actions of rulers in the past. I see similar behaviors in political leaders of today as I do in Israel's king in the time of Elisha. Perhaps we are meant to set aside our hopes in current political leadership in exchange for what will give us true healing.

In today's Gospel reading, Luke 4, Jesus specifically comments on the masses of people who were not cleansed by the prophets of the past. I find Jesus' position comforting as He recognizes the mistrust between the prophets of the past and the people. What can we do about that today? As suggested in the story, perhaps we should listen to powerless people, such as the slave girl. We should put more of our faith in Jesus, the living God, who currently helps us. [Fittingly, today's Responsorial Psalm has us proclaim, "Athirst is my soul for the living God."] We can also put our faith in baptism, which Naaman participated in to cleanse himself in the Jordan.

Dr. Lindsey Mao

Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences, Lisle Campus

Tuesday of the Third Week of Lent | March 5, 2024

[Daniel 3:25, 34-43](#)

[Psalm 25:4-9](#)

[Matthew 18:21-35](#)

Today's reading is about forgiveness. Peter asks Jesus "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" It is not easy to forgive, especially if someone hurts us repeatedly. The Scripture shows that Jesus was aware of our human tendency to put limits on our forgiveness. We feel we have the right to hold back our forgiveness or to do it carefully, conditionally, and perhaps even grudgingly. But Jesus is calling us to forgive because what we are to forgive is far less than what God has already forgiven us. Foremost in Jesus' mind is how forgiving God is to us. When we forgive, we receive the gift of God's forgiveness.

Furthermore, forgiving gives us the gift of being in communion with others and being reconciled with them. Moreover, forgiving also frees us from anger, bitterness, hurt, resentment, and self-righteousness. Letting go of these things frees us from the pains and the heavy burden of carrying those feelings that caused us to feel this way.

Lastly, forgiving makes us more God-like. Society may make us

believe that forgiveness looks like weakness. However, the truth is, it takes strength to forgive. Augustan English poet Alexander Pope said, "To err is human; to forgive, divine." God forgives, and so there is something God-like about forgiveness.

So, in this Season of repentance and asking for forgiveness, let us forgive as well. We cannot ask God for His forgiveness if we are not willing to forgive others. May these remaining weeks of Lent give us the grace to forgive.

Dr. Maria Granic

Associate Professor, English Language and Literature, Mesa Campus

Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent | March 6, 2024

[Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9](#)

[Psalm 147:12-16, 19-20](#)

[Matthew 5:17-19](#)

In the readings for today, it opens with Moses talking about the laws of the land to the Israelites. He discusses how the Lord had commanded him to teach the laws of the Lord and how they should pass these laws on to their children and future generations. This reminded me of our daily lives, where we should be living out God's Commandments and His word the best we can because we do not know when the Lord is coming. The importance of following the word is great because this is what we will pass down to our future generations. As we are in this Lenten season, we must focus on giving back to the Lord as He did for us by giving us Jesus to save us. To keep the word alive today, try and read the readings and gospel for today and think about what you can do to practice living out God's word.

Caitlin Cardamone '25

Lisle Campus

Thursday of the Third Week of Lent | March 7, 2024

[Jeremiah 7:23-28](#)

[Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9](#)

[Luke 11:14-23](#)

Based upon the reading, especially now in what is happening in the world today we need to **LISTEN to God's voice and walk in his ways**. We see there are many who are not heeding but rather not obeying and turning their backs on God. Despite what's happening with all the strife, evilness, lawlessness, contempt, deceit, and lack of moral/Christian standards, we must strive to LISTEN to God's voice and

abide by his commandments. We will be judged on how we live our lives and must be ready for our final judgment day. We must continue to have FAITH and not FEAR and continue to have hope for without hope there is despair and despair is contrary to our belief in God's goodness and compassion. "Despair is fought with faith."

As the responsorial Psalm states: "If today you hear his voice, harden not your heart."

We must not let the evil in this world foreshadow all the good that God is doing in our lives. We need to continue to put our faith and trust in God – He is our Savior.

Debbie Kirk

Assistant to the Interim Chief Financial Officer, Lisle Campus

Friday of the Third week of Lent | March 8, 2024

[Hosea 14:2-10](#)

[Psalms 81:6-11, 14, 17](#)

[Mark 12:28-34](#)

The gospel reading for today focuses on Jesus's interaction with one of the scribes in which Jesus was asked which commandment is most important. To that Jesus replied

"The first is this:

Hear, O Israel!

The Lord our God is Lord alone!

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

The second is this:

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

There is no other commandment greater than these."

All Catholics are instilled with these ideas from the moment they step into the church, and the variations of these teachings can be found in many Mass readings and homilies. We do know that the 10 Commandments issued to Moses like "You shall not murder" or "You shall not steal" must be observed, but surely if you observe the commandments as stated by Jesus then others just follow naturally since you will "not murder" or "not steal" from anyone who you love as yourself. My personal struggle with the first commandment arose when in few homilies I heard the priest imply that my love for God should be

so absolute that it supersedes other “loves”: love for parents, a spouse, or children. This in turn somehow implies that, if forced to make a choice, I would need to choose God over my family.

At this point I would like to help anyone what has similar thoughts or akin unease about it. It took me a long time to realize how wrong it was to somehow separate my love for my family and love for God. God itself IS the reason for existence of the world as we know it, reason for the existence of people, my family, and most importantly reason for the existence of love itself. There would be no love without God, which automatically puts other “types of love” in the back seat. Loving God is loving life itself. Loving God is loving myself, my family, my neighbor, every living that surrounds me, and everything else that I can see, touch, hear, smell, or just imagine. Loving God means you love the world, and that is indeed the most wonderful commandment of all.

Dr. Darya Aleinikava

Associate Professor, Physical Sciences, Lisle Campus

Saturday of the Third Week of Lent | March 9, 2024

[Hosea 6:1-6](#)

[Psalms 51:3-4, 18-21AB](#)

[Luke 18:9-14](#)

“O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous — or even like this tax collector.” The story of the Pharisee and the tax collector brings an incredible amount of insight into how we are and are not supposed to live, think, and act. The Pharisee is boasting to God in prayer while the tax collector recognizes his short comings as sinner. Every follower of Christ has so much to learn in this gospel. In the past, I personally have had the same pharisee’s thought about being more deserving from God over other people for stuff I did. Until a reality check hit in and made me reshape how I talked to God in my prayers and how I look at other people. No two people are made the same, and no two people will have the same path to heaven.

The tax collector also serves as a purpose and a reminder for all his to reflect upon us and in the eyes of God. We are all sinners, but it is how we approach and recognize actions we say or do not say in front of our Lord. I have been reading *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young and I came across this: “As you gaze at Me through the eyes of your heart, you can see the world around you from My perspective”. What an incredible reminder that the purest way to follow and talk to God is through your heart where you desire His presence the most. And the most important

reflection that jumped out at me is “for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Nick Reid '25
Lisle Campus

Sunday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 10, 2024

[2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23](#)

[Psalms 137:1-6](#)

[Ephesians 2:4-10](#)

[John 3:14-21](#)

The first reading from 2 Chronicles recounts the last years of the monarchy of Judah during the 6th century B.C. Society had failed. It was not just the failure of leadership, but the failure of everyone - "all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the Lord's temple." God reached out repeatedly with compassion, sending messengers for their redemption. But they were repeatedly ignored, scoffed at, and turned away. God became so enraged that he allowed the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and the kingdom by the armies of Babylon, sending the entire society into exile as prisoners. Yet God ultimately showed mercy through an entirely unexpected turn of events. The Persians conquered Babylon under king Cyrus. A pagan king, of all people, took pity on the people of Israel and ensured that the exiles returned to their homeland. Then the temple was rebuilt. Despite rejection of God's love, God ultimately had a plan to show forgiveness. This reading serves as a simple reminder of how, even when we are in distress and situations seem hopeless, hope remains. However, it also calls us to consider what led us into distress in the first place. When distress hits us, is it because we also ignored God's messengers and God's plan?

Dr. Tim Marin
Professor, Physical Sciences, Lisle Campus

Monday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 11, 2024

[Isaiah 65:17-21](#)

[Psalms 30:2, 4-6, 11-13B](#)

[John 4:43-54](#)

This reading is a beautiful vision of the future restoration and renewal promised by God, where sorrow and suffering will be replaced with joy and abundance. This promise of a new heaven and a new earth is

a recurring theme of harmony in creation. This reading has a deep meaning in my current life because I was in a moment of sadness on various occasions. I lost motivation, I felt burned out, and I was feeling like giving up. However, I gave all my worries to the Lord and became patient enough to let time heal everything within me that needed healing. “The things of the past shall not be remembered or come to mind. Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create.” I liked this quote because it reminds me of a hopeful outlook, focusing on the present and future rather than dwelling on the past. Creating joy and happiness in what lies ahead is a wonderful way to approach life. This is applied in my daily life because I am someone who creates joy and happiness each and every day. I live my life to the fullest and wake up with joy to begin my day with kindness to spare. Amongst my peers, to brighten up their day and bring meaning into the purpose of our lives.

Stephany Mondragon '26
Lisle Campus

Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 12, 2024

[Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12](#)

[Psalms 46:2-9](#)

[John 5:1-16](#)

I worry about the rain. Too little, or too much. The garden drying out, the rising cost of city water. The sump pump failing, the foundation leaking, the basement flooding. These anxieties are annual, in the spring or late summer, in the Midwest.

Yet my sources of water are safe and stable, a privilege many do not share. And it takes some imagination to picture the historical moment of Ezekiel or John, when water wasn't reliably carried to or away, except in the most developed cities in the region. When communities and civilizations needed water and died without it.

It's fitting then to draw metaphors, shaped by age-old fears and anxieties, about water. Ezekiel, writing from present-day Iraq and the cradle of civilization, describes water flowing “from beneath the temple.” In his allegory, that trickle of water quickly turns to flood, impossible to ford, impassable. So much that Ezekiel sits on the bank of the river and considers not the risks, but the rewards: the abundant life, the bountiful harvest. Water as source!

John's Gospel proclaims Jesus's miracles in Jerusalem, where he cured illness or blindness at the public pool. I imagine a therapeutic spa

that drew many from the region to its healing waters. One man who couldn't walk hoped for relief in the pool, but he had no one to help him get in or out. Jesus tested his faith and healed him at the poolside. The man never even submerged. Maybe this miracle story is a variation on the baptism rite, a rebirth caused by faith alone.

I understand that John the Evangelist alluded to water frequently. The familiar phrase "living water" – the Holy Spirit, the source of salvation – comes from John (4:10; 7:38). For John, water is a profound metaphor that tracks even further in this gospel story, which seems to end well, except that Jesus performed this miracle on the Sabbath, against Jewish law and custom. Following the miracle, as the crowd rose against him, Jesus "slipped away," like water.

Greg Ott

Assistant Professor, Writing, Lisle Campus

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 13, 2024

[Isaiah 49:8-15](#)

[Psalms 145:8-9, 13CD-14, 17-18](#)

[John 5:17-30](#)

As we enter this fourth Wednesday of Lent, I cannot help but to look at this liturgical year with both anticipation of the future and amazement of this year as a whole. This life we live is really only a journey towards joining our Lord in Heaven. The Church through her Liturgical seasons helps us to not only come closer to Jesus and understanding of His life, but to also provide us with examples of how to combat the stressors of life that we all face on a daily basis.

In the readings of today, we are provided with a life-line, one to help us combat one of the greatest stressors there is, fear. Fear of being abandoned, fear of being forsaken, fear of being crushed by the burdens we are facing. This is a most painful fear, each one of us carries this in one way or another. The noises of this world lead us to believe that we are indeed alone, carrying whatever problems we have without comfort, support or help. My dear friends, how blessed we are today to be reminded of our Lord's ever-present Love.

“ ‘But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me;

My Lord has forgotten me.’

Can a mother forget her infant,

Be without tenderness for the child of her womb?

Even should she forget

I will never forget you.”

This again is reaffirmed in a passage from the Gospel of today.

“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life.”

Here we are again reminded by our Lord that so long as we have faith and hear His word, we would receive eternal life. Which is really our whole reason for life in the first place!

Not only does our Lord help us by being our ever-present companion, or by giving us His word but also by providing us with role models to help guide us on our journey. Today's Saint of the Day does just that, by providing us with the tools necessary to combat fear. St. Leander of Seville, Bishop and Doctor of the Church initiated the recitation of the Nicene Creed at all masses to help combat the fear of his time and those of all to come. What better way to combat fear, than by increasing our faith through a prayer that not only is a brief overview of our Lord's life but also a reminder of how much we are loved?

“For us men and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,

and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,

he suffered death and was buried,

and rose again on the third day

in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory

to judge the living and the dead

and his kingdom will have no end.” - excerpt from the Nicene Creed.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, do not let your hearts be burdened with fear, or crushed out of loneliness for our Lord is love. His ever-present love is with you always. Spend time with our Lord today, reflect on his life and on the prayer of the Nicene Creed and remember what our Lord said to Isaiah:

“Even should she forget

I will never forget you”

Elizabeth Reniche

Director of Operations for the Goodwin College of Business, Lisle Campus

Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 14, 2024

[Exodus 32:7-4](#)

[Psalm 106:19-23](#)

[John 5:31-47](#)

Failure. A scary word for most people. A word that can signify the end, loss, or lack of success. We tend to read too much into failure. Too often we tie failure into our self-worth or self-esteem. But what is that saying? When one door closes, another door opens?

Failure can signify re-birth, a chance to start over. New beginnings. The chance to adapt and build a new foundation. As leaders, failure can teach us mercy and forgiveness.

During this Lenten season, I think it is more important now than ever to understand that we are all only human and that failure is inevitable. But how we handle that failure in ourselves, and how we show mercy and forgiveness to others, is what creates a stronger sense of self, a stronger Benedictine community, and a stronger world for all of mankind.

Jessica Jelinek

Associate Chief of Staff/Director of Marketing, Lisle Campus

Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 15, 2024

[Wisdom 2:1A, 12-22](#)

[Psalm 34:17-23](#)

[John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30](#)

On Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent, we are tasked with reading about the evildoers of Judea. They are trying to kill Jesus, as they doubt that Jesus is the real Son of God. Throughout the reading, they constantly ridicule him and question his true intentions. They talk about using “revilement and torture” to test the Lord. At the end, however, it all gets sorted out by the Lord saying, “These were their thoughts, but they erred; for their wickedness blinded them, and they knew not the hidden counsels of God; neither did they count on a recompense of holiness nor discern the innocent souls' reward.” This stuck with me because of how we can apply this story to our own lives. There will always be people out there who will talk bad about you and others and try to bring you down. However, the Lord wants you to stay strong and believe in what you stand for. The “innocent souls” of the Lord always have the great reward when they don’t give into the negativity.

I think the responsorial psalm is also very telling for how to put our full trust in God. Even if we find ourselves feeling down amid life's challenges, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted." The Lord saves us from distress if we put our full faith in him. This is especially present during Lent, where we become even closer to God. We are each going through our own difficulties during this period of transforming ourselves into better people. The Lord hears us, sees us, and has a plan for us. It is imperative to keep the faith in order to truly experience Lent in the way the Lord intended. Keep the faith.

John Creviston '25
Lisle Campus

Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent | March 16, 2024

[Jeremiah 11:18-20](#)
[Psalms 7:23, 9BC-12](#)
[John 7:40-53](#)

My reflection is about the book of Jeremiah verses 18-20. The main theme of this is making your actions good. Are the actions we take daily following the idea of being a good person. For me this allowed me to look into all aspects of my life from my work life to my personal life to reflect on the actions and decisions I make based on being a good person.

Every plan that you have might not go as perfect as you might hope but it really depends on how you react to the changes and then go back and reflect on what you decided on. These decisions and reflections help you shape the person you are today and aspire to become tomorrow.

Charlie Averkamp
Director of Student Life and Athletics, Mesa Campus

Fifth Sunday of Lent | March 17, 2024

[Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)
[Psalms 51:3-4, 12-15](#)
[Hebrews 5:7-9](#)
[John 12:20-33](#)

Today's Lenten theme brings us to a reflective examination of our hearts, prompting the question: Why is God's grace so sufficient even when we feel undeserving? This question lingered in my mind as I delved into the Old Testament reading (Jeremiah 31:31-34), where God promises to establish a new covenant with his people specifically the House of

Israel and Judah. This new covenant often described as a "life agreement," was ultimately fulfilled through Jesus' death and resurrection. It marks a departure from the old covenant established during the Exodus from Egypt, as God pledges to inscribe His law within the hearts of the people.

Key phrases that resonated with me include: "I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts," "All, from least to greatest, shall know me," and "I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more." These phrases hold significance, signaling that the new covenant opens the opportunity for ALL people to develop an internal and personal relationship with God. This opportunity is freely given when we repent and entrust our lives to Christ. Furthermore, the Book of Daniel emphasizes that "The Lord Our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him." God's profound love is demonstrated in His forgiveness of our sins, bestowed upon us even when we don't deserve it. The greatest gift, given freely, is the result of the laws that God has placed within us.

Reflecting on my personal journey, there have been numerous instances where I disobeyed God, yet He forgave me countless out of His love, recognizing my heart and intent. In light of today's Gospel reading (John 12:20-33), Jesus declares, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified," revealing that Christ is the fulfillment of God's plan as prophesied by Jeremiah. Hebrews chapter 5:7-9 further supports this, illustrating that through Christ's willingness, He became the source of eternal salvation.

Today, I encourage you to examine your heart and strive for a renewed commitment to align your life with God's grace.

Joshua Abedu-Bentsi '25

Lisle Campus

Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent | March 18, 2024

[Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62](#)

[Psalms 23:1-6](#)

[John 8:1-11](#)

The main passage for today is referred to as the *Story of Susanna and the Elders*, found in Daniel 13. While left out in Protestant Bibles due to dispute among scholars, this passage was found in the Greek version of the Bible used by the early church. Briefly, the story focuses on a woman named Susanna, the wife of a rich man living in 6th century BCE during Israel's Babylonian Exile, who was apparently as beautiful as she was virtuous. Two religious elders who had long lusted for Susanna made

private sexual demands and accused her of adultery when she refused to succumb to their demands. Elders were presumed to be religiously upright men who functioned as wise judges over the Jews in their captivity. Susanna cried out to God and sought clemency the next day at court. With the elders' false testimony along with her lowly female status, she was judged guilty by the public and the court but subsequently saved at the final hour by a young Daniel (yes, Daniel of the 'lion's den') who spoke up as she was swiftly led off for execution. Daniel called for immediate redress of the case insisting on evidence, and he devised a clever interview strategy exposing the elders' false testimony, proving Susanna's innocence, and ending in the arrest of the lying elders.

A strong theme in this and complementary readings today is found throughout the Old Testament stories and refreshed in Jesus' teachings--the perennial struggle against falsehood and injustice and the importance of faith in God's justice and truth.

The concept of justice resounds in the story outcome and demonstrates God's just character and faithfulness to those who know and trust him. Susanna was a woman of real integrity and inner strength who chose not to compromise her morals and instead looked to God in the face of serious false accusations against her and certain death. Through Daniel, God's active role was demonstrated in upholding justice and protecting the innocent.

The words of the well-known Psalm 23, the *responsorial* psalm for today, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want", conveys the wisdom of placing complete trust in God's care no matter what we encounter. "Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side" is a metaphor for facing inner darkness and outer challenges. Both Susanna and the psalmist expressed profound trust in God for their deliverance and ultimate wellness. I have personally found this psalm to be the 'tonic' for hard times in my life. Each time I read it I see new meaning and application.

As we all know from history and all too often today, injustice frequently arises from false accusation and abuse of power, even from so-called religious people or leaders. The model of Susanna should inspire us all to be unwavering in what we know to be true and right and just, trusting that God, whose very nature is just, will in *some* way protect and defend us from evil. As St. Augustine said in his commentary on this passage, "It is good for me not to do the wicked thing and fall into your clutches, rather than to commit sin in God's sight." Justice will indeed prevail and in challenging situations we are reminded by Susanna to stand firm and rely on it.

This story also inspires us to be 'a Daniel' and step up to defend

others who are in need of justice. Scripture commands us to speak up for those who need help. A couple of well-known Scripture passages come to mind: “Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” [Proverbs 31:8-9] “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.” [Isaiah 1:17] If we say we are believers in God, we must stand against injustice in all its forms.

Finally, the famous Gospel passage in John 8 included in the readings today complements this theme. Jesus encountered an adulteress brought to him by her religious accusers to lawfully condemn and stone her. He stunningly said, “let him who is without sin cast the first stone”, resulting in everyone uncomfortably slinking away. Seeing none to throw the first stone, Jesus also did not judge her but with grace sent the woman on her way telling her to ‘sin no more’. God demands justice but has a merciful nature and prefers repentance and redemption over punishment to satisfy his requirement. Before the advent of Jesus, breaking God's laws called for confession and redemption through sacrificing a lamb. This story beautifully demonstrates how Jesus brought a new way of justice, with grace, mercy and love. During this Lenten season we remember Jesus' death and can be assured that we are no longer judged and condemned but saved through faith in Him and His perfect sacrifice.

Dr. Bonnie Beezhold

Associate Dean of the College of Science and Health

Solemnity of St. Joseph | March 19, 2024

[2 Samuel 7:4-5A, 12-14A, 16](#)

[Psalms 89:2-5, 27, 29](#)

[Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22](#)

[Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24A](#)

What does it mean to answer God's call and to surrender one's self in service to His will?

There may be many ways in which God calls upon us to serve Him and to serve others. In some cases, we find those opportunities in the everyday; a chance to volunteer, to treat others with kindness, to support someone who is down or not feeling well, or any other myriad of ways we can be the light of the Lord in the world. In the broader sense, we are called to a “vocation,” which is different from a job or career, it is answering a calling. As Pope John Paul II explained, vocation answers the question of “Why am I alive?” (Andreas Widmer, “The Importance of

Vocation,” *The Catholic Thing*, January 26, 2012).

In my own life, my “why” came when I met my wonderful wife over two decades ago and we answered the call to marriage and family, which has blessed us with three beautiful children. In many ways, my path was always laid out for me as my parents named me after St. Joseph, whose Solemnity we celebrate this day; husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and patron Saint of families and fathers and expectant mothers (among many others). It is from St. Joseph that I reflect upon what the vocation of marriage and family truly means to give one’s life over to the vocation of marriage and family.

The readings today lead us to Joseph, son of David, and his role as husband and father. We learn in the first reading of God’s intention toward David to “raise up [David’s] heir” even after David’s passing from the Earth (2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16), and in the second reading the ancestral legacy born from the promise from God to Abraham (Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22). Both of these readings lay the foundation for the Gospel reading from Mathew (1:16, 18-21, 24a) and the role of St. Joseph as husband and father; preserving the ancestral legacy of generations that preceded him, and helping to nurture and protect Mary, our Blessed Mother, and Jesus who sacrificed himself for us and to bring us to eternal life.

When the angel of the Lord tells Joseph to “not be afraid” to take Mary into his home, Joseph is being invited, in essence, to surrender himself to God’s will. Invited, yes. Forced, no. Joseph is being presented with God’s will and the knowledge of what he is being called to do, but it was ultimately up to him as to whether he would answer that call. What might have happened if Joseph lacked faith or allowed the pressures and fears from Earthly concerns turn him from God’s will and flee from what the Angel of the Lord commanded? What would that have meant for the Blessed Virgin and the unborn Christ? What would that have meant for all of humanity? Fortunately for us, Joseph chose God and committed himself to his divinely inspired duties. In doing so, he demonstrates the path of giving of one’s self entirely over to God by tending to Mary and in helping to raise Jesus.

On this day of celebration of the Solemnity of St. Joseph, may his life and works help serve as an example to us as we surrender ourselves to the will of the Lord, and to embrace our vocational calling to nurture and raise the light of Christ in ourselves and in others.

Dr. Joseph Foy
President

Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent | March 20, 2024

[Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95](#)

[Daniel 3:52-56](#)

[John 8:31-42](#)

Even if...

My name is changed

Still...

You have called me daughter

Even if...

My identity is threatened

Still...

I am rooted in You

Even if...

Death stares me in the face

Still...

Jehovah-Shammah

Even if...

Fire consumes me

Still...

I am being refined

Praised are You

Exalted are You

Gracious God

In whom I remain faithful

You join in my suffering

You perform miracles

I abide in You

I take up Your cross

A living sacrifice

In You, I am free

Kirsten Loja '25

Lisle Campus

Thursday of the Fifth Week of Lent | March 21, 2024

[Genesis 17:3-9](#)

[Psalms 105:4-9](#)

[John 8:51-59](#)

As I reflected upon the readings for today, my mind concentrated on being ready and willing to hear God's voice and the messages that he is trying to reach us with. Often times we are closed off to hearing things we may not be ready to hear. As we strengthen our relationship with God, God is inviting us into a relationship full of trust and unconditional support. It is important to leave our hearts and minds open to hearing his message. Why is God calling us?

The Gospel today (John 8:51-59) shows us that there are times when the Lord's message might be unbelievable to hear. Perhaps the message comes at an inconvenient time in our lives, or perhaps we aren't in a trusting relationship with God so that we understand that the Lord is actually speaking to us! Rather than turn ourselves away from that message, God asks us to turn into the message. Will we listen when God is speaking to us?

In every situation of our lives, God is speaking to us. Might be subtle...might be more elaborate or "in our face." These messages might be expected as though we asked for God to speak to us...they might be unexpected. When we trust that God is always speaking to us, we open ourselves up to the wonderful things that God might be inviting us to join.

Lord--the readings today help us remember that You have made a covenant with each of us. We know that You are always faithful to that covenant...help us be mindful that our role as followers of You is to trust this covenant and be ready and willing to listen when called on even in the most unexpected moments. Amen.

Bryan Goodwin

Director of Facilities Management, Lisle Campus

Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent | March 22, 2024

[Jeremiah 20:10-13](#)

[Psalms 18:2-7](#)

[John 10:31-42](#)

The Bible is a unique book in that it is not a book at all; it is many books. Because of this, we get to experience not just one person's thoughts and experiences with life and God, but many different people over many different places and times. In the readings today from Jeremiah, Psalms, and John, we are taken on an emotional roller coaster

of despair, trust, fear, and confidence. What a gift! Those are emotions each of us have felt in our lives. They are common to the human experience, which means they were common for Jeremiah, the psalmist, John, and even Jesus.

- When have you felt despair?
- When have you felt others did not understand you, or even persecuted you?
- When have you felt trust and hope?
- When, if ever, have you felt you can trust God?

Prayer: O Mighty Champion, O Rock of Refuge, you who sees our innermost hearts and loves beyond imagining, help us to trust in you. Help us to trust that even in the face of persecution, you are by our sides and embracing our broken hearts. Amen.

Carol Allen

Assistant Director of Campus Ministry, Lisle Campus

Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent | March 23, 2024

[Ezekiel 37:21-28](#)

[Jeremiah 31:10-13](#)

[John 11:45-56](#)

From the readings for this Saturday of the 5th week of Lent, several themes emerged for me, centering on the ideas of unity, protection, sanctuary, happiness, safety, and renewal. In particular, the first reading includes “my sanctuary shall be set up among them forever” (Ez. 37:28), and the responsorial psalm includes, “the Lord will guard us, as a shepherd guards his flock” (Jeremiah 13:10), both of which focus on protection.

This theme can also be seen in the life and work of the saint of the day, Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo (1538-1606), who was sent to lead the archdiocese of Lima, Peru. Despite his protests, he took the appointment and worked tirelessly to fight oppression of the native population by colonizers, as well as other scandals and abuse in the area (see his saint of the day story at www.franciscanmedia.org). In this way, he became a protector – a shepherd. He did not initially feel he was qualified, but took the appointment and did the hard work helping the vulnerable who had been wronged.

To me, the readings and the story of the saint of the day provide encouragement and a reminder. We are not absolved from doing the right thing or from helping others because we aren’t confident in our ability to do so. During this time of reflection, may we all pause to consider the good that others see in us that we may not always see in

ourselves. How might we already be prepared to help heal, protect, and build community with others?

Dr. Al Legutki
Professor, Music, Lisle Campus

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion | March 24, 2024

[Mark 11:1-10](#)

[Isaiah 50:4-7](#)

[Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24](#)

[Philemon 2:6-11](#)

[Mark 14:1-15:47](#)

“Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches they had cut from the fields. Those preceding him and those following kept crying out: “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is to come! Hosanna in the highest!” (Mark 11: 8-10)

The gospel reading for today from Mark 11: 1-10 signifies the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Passover with his disciples which preceded his suffering. Surprisingly, upon entering people welcomed him with loud cries honoring him as the expected King, shouting Hosanna. The main idea here is the revelation of Jesus' identity as the Messiah as people cried out at his arrival, Jesus revealed himself publicly as he came on the donkey. Riding on the ass signifies the type of his kingdom, the simplicity. Another main idea is the fulfillment of the prophecy that was foretold in the Old Testament “Then in haste every man of them took his garment, and put it under him on the bare steps, and they blew the trumpet, and proclaimed, Jehu is king.” (2 Kings 9:13). His arrival gave people great expectations for him to be the king they had been waiting for.

Entering Jerusalem, Jesus was welcomed in a joyful spirit, people laid their cloaks and palm branches on the ground as a form of worship because they were expecting him to be their king who would rule them with earthly power and authority. To their surprise, things did not turn out as they expected, they plotted against him, arrested him, and crucified him on the cross. At the time of Jesus, people crucified him physically by mocking, spitting, beating him, nailing him on the wooden cross, and finally giving him vinegar to drink and pierced his side. In our days Jesus is still being crucified, one might ask the question how is Jesus crucified in our world today? The irresponsible earthly power and authority that Jesus condemned is the leading cause of Jesus' crucifixion today, in this kind of power lots of thousands of innocent lives are being

lost every day and we see these in every day's news and it is all because of greed, selfishness, and carelessness. Our world is accountable for these innocent lives, we are accountable for these lives and each individual is accountable for these lives. Let us stand up for truth and change the world just like Jesus Christ the author of our lives who conquered death through his suffering.

During this Holy Week, we should ask ourselves the following questions: What are our expectations for Jesus in our daily life, are they fulfilled? What if our expectations were not being fulfilled, do we still believe in him? What are some of the perceptions that we have about events happening in our individual lives, do we see Jesus leading as the King of our hearts or we are doubting? Take time during this Holy Week to reflect on the events you are encountering in your life. What is the relationship with your neighbor, are you the one creating peace, uniting people or are you the opposite? Think about our world today, in your little corner and space are you contributing to the world division? If yes, are willing to change and start contributing toward peace, love, and unity?

Remember, God does not change his plan towards us, we change our perception towards God; perhaps because our expectations were not met. God remains the author of our lives.

Sr. Hyacintha Nepela '24
Lisle Campus

Monday of Holy week | March 25, 2024

[Isaiah 42:1-7](#)

[Psalms 27:1-3, 13-14](#)

[John 12:1-11](#)

John 12: 1-11 is an impactful reading due to the fact that it discusses the topic of treating others with equality and respect. It is a teaching that many could benefit from in this day and age. As each day passes by, it seems as though others have forgotten the most important lesson of Christ's teachings. That teaching is that we all are one. We are all one family; he often referred to those he preached to as brother or sister. He acknowledged the interwoven connection that they all shared from the Father. This particular reading helps one think of today's society in which others have come to care very little about one another. Society has reached a point in which humanity has forgotten that we all are connected. A rather heartbreaking notion because it shows how cruel humanity has become. Cruel may seem like a harsh word to use, but it is true. Watch the news today! Wars are taking place in other countries

and we are dividing ourselves into sides. We post about which sides we are for and become virtual enemies with strangers who don't share our view. It's quite ridiculous as it shows how others disregard the emotions of those who are close to them. I just hope that one day society can be gentler and more caring; an environment where the generation of youth can flourish and be created with equality and respect.

This story moves in me a desire for equal treatment for all. I have experienced being treated less than equal. As a person of color, I have had a lot of experiences of discrimination against me. I may not look as if I'm a person of color, which tends to confuse others. However, once it is discovered, I've had people change their attitudes towards me. These experiences are disheartening because Jesus preached equality. He preached accepting others for who they are and to look beyond one's gender, status, skin color, and ethnicity. It is a lesson we can all benefit from within modern day society. I believe that in order for society and humanity as whole to thrive, we need to be kinder towards one another. Being kinder to one another would help make the world a bit of a kinder place. It doesn't take much to be kind to one another and yet it is such a rarity to see.

Alma Alvarado '24
Lisle Campus

Tuesday of Holy Week | March 26, 2024

[Isaiah 49:1-6](#)

[Psalm 71:1-6, 15, 17](#)

[John 13:21-33, 36-38](#)

Isaiah's Servant of the Lord, Israel, was conscious of God's work in his life, and he devoted his days to servitude. God called on him to be the light of the nations and show the brothers and sisters of faith God's true glory.

Is 49:1-6 "Yet my reward is with the LORD,
my recompense is with my God.
For now the LORD has spoken
who formed me as his **servant** from the womb"

As a future medical professional, I challenge those in this field, and others, to believe in what God has called you to do. You serve Him and His strength resides in you. Allow God into your life and spread His word. Trust in Him that He has a plan for your life, that you will humbly receive his strength, and that He guides you to eternal life.

Psalm 71 denotes that God is a place of refuge from the unholy, unjust world.

“I will sing of your salvation.
Be my rock of refuge,
a stronghold to give me safety,
for you are my rock and my fortress.
O my God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked.”

In this time of Lent, reflect on where you search for peace, pleasure, and happiness is important. Turn to God as we are called to serve Him in all of this glory on this Earth and give up worldly desires.

Heavenly father, I ask you to guide those reading to peace with you in all your glory.

In the name of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

Jenna Demas '24

Lisle Campus

Wednesday of Holy Week | March 27, 2024

[Isaiah 50:4-9A](#)

[Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34](#)

[Matthew 26:14-25](#)

In these verses, the psalmist is talking to God about tough times. They feel hurt and ashamed, even among their own family. The reason? They really care about God's house, and this has led to insults and rejection from others. The speaker feels broken and weak, looking for comfort but finding none. Instead, they get treated harshly, with gall in their food and vinegar to drink. I would say I can relate to this in a way with different projects I have started. When certain things don't go how I imagined I get disappointed in myself very quickly but as time goes it teaches me patience, understanding, and grace. The Protestant Christian Student Group (PCSG) that I have started with my friends gives me a sense of trust in God's plan. There is so much that I want to do with this group, and with God's great love, we can.

Tuan Cer '27

Lisle Campus

Holy Thursday of the Lord's Supper | March 28, 2024

[Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14](#)

[Psalm 116:12-13, 15-18](#)

[1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)

[John 13:1-15](#)

In John's Last Supper account, Jesus washes the feet of His disciples. He is turning things around. The greatest will be the least, and the least will be the greatest. He, the greatest, performs a very lowly, yet loving act. And by His example, shows us what it means to "love one another as I loved you." Then Jesus gives us another command "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." This is the equivalent in the Gospel of John of "Do this in memory of me."

We all know that the Eucharist is the "source and summit of the Christian life." But in his Last Supper account, John leaves out Jesus speaking of the bread and wine as His body and blood. Why? Because John understood deeply the mystery of the Eucharist. Foot washing is a symbol of all the humble acts of service that disciples of Jesus should be willing to do for one another - and not just willing, but actively doing. Whenever we do the humblest service for one another, we make "real" the presence of Jesus among us.

In our usual manner of speaking, service is something we do while the Eucharist is something we receive. Today however, we are reminded that, in addition to being something we receive, the Eucharist is also something we do - for others and for the world. When we receive the Eucharist or when we offer service, we are like the bread and wine. Just as they symbolize the fruits of the earth and the work of human hands, we symbolize humanity. In our communion with the Lord, the whole world is drawn into communion with Him. When we receive the Eucharist, we serve the people of the world by receiving on their behalf, as their agent.

From the other side of the table, is there *Eucharist-ing* going on when we serve? The answer is yes. The Eucharist is the transformation of all things of this world into the body of Christ, the fullness of creation. When we offer service to God or do service to God through service to one another, we are helping turn the world a little more toward what God intended it to be. The transformation of our service into the Reign of God parallels the transformation of bread and wine.

Tomorrow, we will see that Jesus loved us enough to die for us. Today, we see that even though He is Our Lord and master, He serves us. John wants to emphasize that such service is essential to our life of faith. Just as the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life, is the body of Christ humbled and sacrificed for us, so, too, is each other's humble service. The Eucharist and service to one another: we cannot have one without the other. For John, they are one and the same.

Fr. Alex Jugilon
Chaplain, Mesa Campus

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion | March 29, 2024

[Isaiah 52:13-53:12](#)

[Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25](#)

[Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9](#)

[John 18:1-19:42](#)

If you know anything about the Catholic faith, you know it's famous for rules and regulations. There's the Sunday obligation, the Easter obligation, and a handful of other holy days of obligation scattered throughout the year.

Curiously, there's no Good Friday obligation. It's one of the two holiest days in the Christian calendar, along with Easter Sunday, and there's nothing required—aside from fasting and abstinence, which anyone with a minimum of willpower can handle.

Between the night of Holy Thursday and the Easter vigil late on Saturday night, Catholicism shifts into low gear and nearly shuts down. Little happens. And especially on Friday, there's no requirement to do anything. You can't even go to Mass. The sacrament is not celebrated.

The physical space of every Catholic church around the world expresses this shutting down visually. The altar is bare—no cloth, no cross, no candles. Churches are dark, quiet, and for the most part empty.

It's as if the church as a whole, imitating the three Marys at the cross, bows before its crucified Lord.

There are rites to perform if you wish, typically in the afternoon and notably the veneration of the cross and the stations of the cross. For me, the most moving has always been the collective reading of John's Passion narrative, recited out loud, while standing. All eighty-two verses.

At Benedictine, we remember the opening line of St. Benedict's Rule: "Listen with the ear of your heart." On Good Friday, around the hour Jesus bowed his head the final time, in a twilight atmosphere without the usual Sunday crowd, we hear in the deepest way possible the story of the "man of suffering"—from the Garden of Gethsemane to the garden tomb.

Isaiah asked, "Who would believe what we have heard?"

On Good Friday, it's hard not to believe.

Dr. Peter Huff
Chief Mission Officer

Holy Saturday the Easter Vigil | March 30, 2024

[Genesis 1:1-2:2 | Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35](#)

[Genesis 22:1-18 | Psalm 16:5, 8-11](#)

[Exodus 14:15-15:1 | Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18](#)

[Isaiah 54:5-14 | Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-13](#)

[Isaiah 55:1-11 | Isaiah 12:2-6](#)

[Baruch 3:9-15, 32C4:4 | Psalm 19:8-11](#)

[Ezekiel 36:16-28 | Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3-4](#)

[Romans 6:3-11 | Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23](#)

[Mark 16:1-7](#)

Each Lent I find myself waiting for the evening of Holy Saturday to arrive. I feel I am sitting on a precipice of something beautiful about to happen. I feel light beginning to creep in and I await for the door to open wide and be flooded with its brightness. I, too, am sitting the dark empty too, waiting for the stone to roll away. Waiting.

While I wait for the celebration of Easter Sunday, I find myself reflecting on my Lenten journey. I honor my past journey and I look to my future guided by the Light. I invite you to honor your Lenten journey. Maybe you didn't follow your Lenten promise as much as you had hoped. That's okay. Maybe you changed your Lenten promise halfway through. That's okay. Maybe you followed your Lenten promise perfect, but you don't feel any closer to God. That's okay. I invite you to see what is most important in this journey – you remained in a space of hope and love.

In the first reading we read the words, “Let there be light,” from the book of Genesis.

Our Gospel reading ends with, “He is going to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.” *You* will see him. *I* will see him. Light invites me to see. Light allows me to see. Light continues to give us hope when we may feel as though we are in the tomb, surrounded by darkness.

The Benedictine wisdom traditions invites us to see God in our neighbor. How is are you seeing the Risen Christ in your neighbor today? What is God inviting you to see today that has been hidden? Now that you have seen the light, what will you do?

Alleluia! He is Risen! Let us go forth and be light to one another.

Carrie Ankeny

Director of Campus Ministry, Lisle Campus

The Resurrection of the Lord | March 31, 2024

[Acts of the Apostles 10:34A, 37-43](#)

[Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23](#)

[Colossians 3:1-4](#)

[Luke 24:13-35](#)

“For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.” This closing line from the Gospel today throws down the challenge: how do we understand this Scripture that he had to rise from the dead?

Rising from the dead is such an absurd notion. We have nothing to compare it to. Everything we know and understand dies; all living things, businesses, machines, planets, stars – these all die. Just a few days ago we enacted the story of Jesus Christ’s death. Death, though mysterious in its own way, is understandable. We can understand that things have an end because all things do.

Easter jolts us awake and away from that conclusion. It contradicts this most basic fact of mortality. Jesus Christ died, the expected outcome for any of us. Then, Jesus Christ was here again, resurrected, miraculous, inspiring questions we never thought we would need to ask. In Church language we call this *mystery*. Mystery invites us to the edge of our humanity, to dream beyond this existence and to love more deeply than we can imagine. Mystery takes a story we hear every year and transforms us in different ways every time. Mystery makes every answer lead to more questions.

The psalmist today instructs us what to do with mystery. “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.” Understanding is not everything. Rejoice and be glad, this work is wonderful in our eyes. This Easter, follow your questions down any rabbit hole you want to go. Then, take a step back and admire the beauty of mystery and rejoice.

Carol Allen
Assistant Director of Campus Ministry, Lisle Campus

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