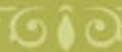




SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2021

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT



Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." - Jn 12:23-24

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 21, 2021

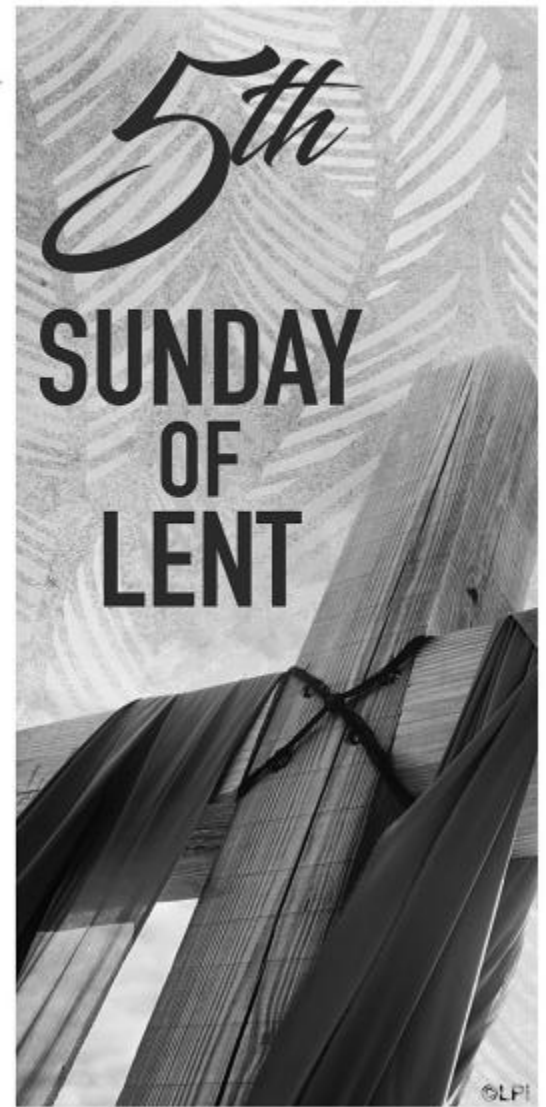
- SUN 3/21** Jer 31:31-34/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15 [12a]/Heb 5:7-9/Jn 12:20-33 or Ez 37:12-14/Rom 8:8-11/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 [7]/Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45
- MON 3/22** Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [4ab]/Jn 8:1-11
- TUE 3/23** Nm 21:4-9/Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21 [2]/Jn 8:21-30
- WED 3/24** Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56 [52b]/Jn 8:31-42
- THR 3/25** Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Ps 40:7-8, 8-9, 10, 11 [8a, 9a]/Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38
- FRI 3/26** Jer 20:10-13/Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7 [cf. 7]/Jn 10:31-42
- SAT 3/27** Ez 37:21-28/Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13 [cf. 10d]/Jn 11:45-56
- SUN 3/28** Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16/Is 50:4-7/Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 [2a]/Phil 2:6-11/Mk 14:1—15:47 or 15:1-39

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 21, 2021

- Sunday:** 5th Sunday of Lent
- Tuesday:** St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop
- Thursday:** The Annunciation of the Lord
- Sunday:** Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord; Holy Week begins

LIVE THE LITURGY Inspiration for the week

How do we convince people that God's law is written upon their hearts? God is wedded to God's people. This is a simple and fundamental fact of life. Yet, many ignore this truth and carry on as if they, or humanity as a whole, are the center of the universe. As a grain of wheat has to fall to the ground and die in order to become what it really is, we too must die to our secular images and ideas of ourselves so that we can become who God really made us to be. If all of us kept our focus on God's deep bonded love with human beings, indeed with our very self, then there would be no need to teach others this fundamental life lesson. They would simply know this truth, as Jeremiah tells us. Somehow, perhaps through original and personal sin, we have lost sight of this reality. We have lost our way and our axis. It is time to find our way back, to learn the virtue of obedience, to pay attention to what God is saying and become aware of the Divine Love that is the reason for all creation. Then, even in our darkest hour when all may seem to be lost, we can say as did Jesus, the model of obedience, "Father, glorify your name." By this perseverance, people can come to know the Lord and what God has done.



*"Bloom
where you
are planted."*

— ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

WORSHIP & MEDITATION



FIRST READING

All, from least to greatest, shall know me,
says the LORD,
for I will forgive their evildoing and remember
their sin no more. (Jer 31:34)



PSALM

Create a clean heart in me, O God. (Ps 51)



SECOND READING

Son though he was, he learned obedience
from what he suffered; (Heb 5:8)



GOSPEL

Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless a grain of wheat falls to
the ground and dies,
it remains just a grain of wheat;
but if it dies, it produces much fruit. (Jn 20:24)

*Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001,
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GOSPEL MEDITATION

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Any good teacher or parent will tell you that once a lesson is really learned it doesn't need to be taught again. When we internalize things we have learned, they become a part of who we are and influence how we perceive and interact with our world. The same is true for the law God has written upon our hearts. Once humanity learns this lesson, we will simply know it to be true and act accordingly. Sometimes, it is hard to get people to learn the lessons they need to learn. They are often distracted, disinterested, conflicted, misdirected, or just too stubborn and unable or unwilling to see what is right before their eyes. Understanding that God is in a loving and committed relationship with those fashioned and formed in God's own image, seems like such a simple lesson to learn. But history and experience has proven that it is not.

We struggle with faith, especially when that faith asks us to learn something very particular about ourselves. We must, like a grain of wheat, fall to the ground and die. Because God's DNA is at the very core of who we are, there are specific pearls of wisdom that must be acquired before we can live a full life. One very powerful lesson is that it is not the task of the world to tell us who we are and what has meaning, but God. For many, death is not an opportunity for greater life but a permanent ending to the life they have known. Jesus knew every dimension to what it means to be fully human because he was! He knows the joys, limitations, sorrows, frustrations, wonders, suffering, opportunities, and joys of the human experience. Jesus can teach us a wealth of knowledge and life's lessons from his example, especially obedience.

When we accept the law God has placed in our hearts and gain wisdom from it, then when we suffer we learn to listen more attentively to the Voice behind that law. We naturally flee to our Creator for inspiration, consolation, hope, direction, and comfort as we navigate through this time of darkness. We will not need to run from it, subdue it, fight it, or be overcome by it because we will know, having internalized this profound lesson before, that God will bring new life. God's law is love and love never fails. Even in the moments of Jesus' deepest despair, he glorified the name of his Father. What he learned allowed him to put everything in perspective and be obedient to the tender, loving Voice that echoed within. As Lent quickly winds down, may we learn the same! Then, may we gain the fortitude and wisdom to help others see what is right before their eyes.





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