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"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON. LISTEN TO HIM." - MK 9:7

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

SUNDAY'S READINGS

FIRST READING:

God put Abraham to the test.
(Gn 22:1)

PSALM:

I will walk before the Lord,
in the land of the living. (Ps 116)

SECOND READING:

If God is for us, who can be against us?
(Rom 8:31)

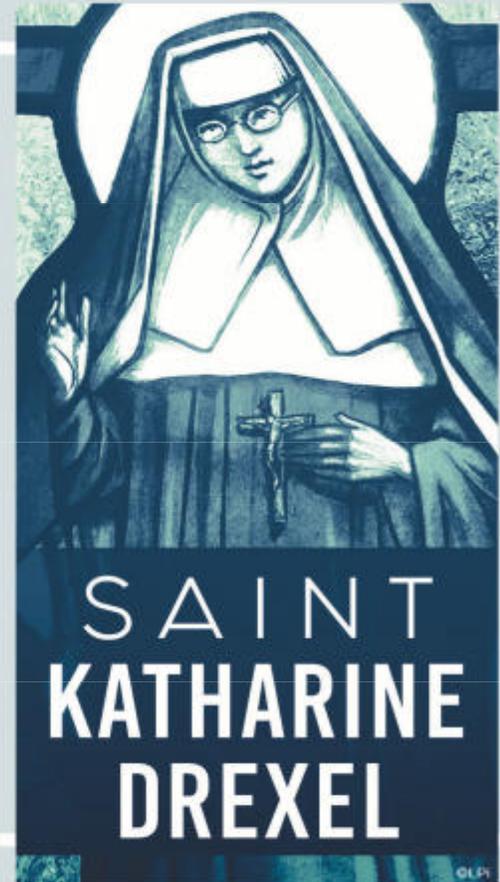
GOSPEL:

"This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."
(Mk 9:7)

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OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Lent
Wednesday: St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin
Thursday: St. Casimir
Next Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Lent



REFLECT

FIRST READING

God's request of Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac seems cruel from our modern perspective. Yet Abraham's obedience rendered divine blessings. Do you think you have such depth of faith?

SECOND READING

Paul tries to reassure the Christians in Rome of God's divine providence in our lives. As we continue the Lenten journey, can you recall when have you felt God's protection and comfort?

GOSPEL READING

We hear Mark's account of the apostles' witness of the transfiguration of Jesus. How difficult do you think it was for them not to share this event with anyone until after Jesus rose from the dead?

WHEN SACRIFICE BECOMES MUNDANE

It seems to happen every year, like clockwork: we drag a bit, as we enter into the second week of Lent. On Ash Wednesday, we feel a bit like soldiers banging our shields, rushing into battle. "We're ready, God!" our hearts cry out. "Transform us through sacrifice! Your will be done!"

But by now, these Lenten resolutions are no longer novelties — they've joined the ranks of everyday inconveniences, which somehow are the hardest to bear. Because transformation, in real life, happens in inches, just as a battle is won slowly in the crash of one sword against another. It's not always a dramatic thing, to the naked eye. It's the perseverance in prayer despite weariness, or the continual denial of some pleasure even though there's that

nagging voice in our minds saying: go ahead, God doesn't really mind.

It's a week when we all need a shock to the system — and wouldn't you know it, this Sunday God gives us a double-whammy of dramatic sacrificial scenes. We picture Abraham, who also cried "Ready!" when God called, never imagining what He would ask: the surrender of his long-awaited son. We see Christ himself transfigured, as God shows us what He is ready to give up for love of us.

We must remain committed, persevering daily in acknowledging that everything belongs to God. What we sacrifice, we simply give back to Him.

If God is for us, who can be against us? Can we still reply, "Ready!" when we hear the call of God?

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

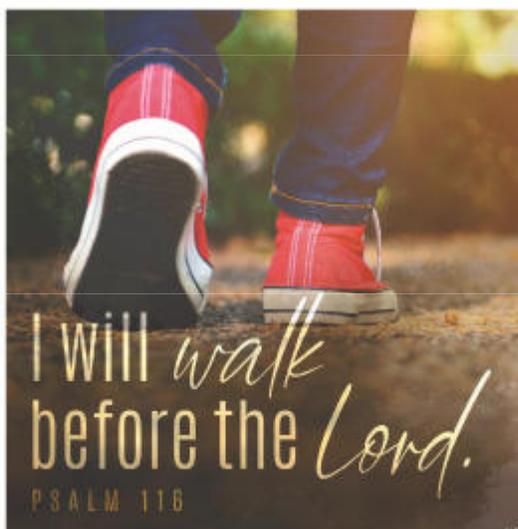
WHY DO WE USE INCENSE AT MASS?

The use of incense in religious ceremonies and worship is a practice that predates Christianity, and which is also found in many other religious traditions today.

Incense, which is made from resin infused with aromatic spices and oils, is one of those fundamentally human symbols that incorporates more than one of our senses, helping us to reflect on realities that transcend the everyday details of our lives.

The use of incense in the Church's liturgy — in the Mass, as well as in devotions to the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours — is inspired by the use of incense in the Jewish tradition. In the writings of the Old Testament, we hear about incense being used in the

worship of the temple, and Psalm 141 asks, "Let my prayer be incense before you; my uplifted hands an evening offering" (vs. 2). The image here is that, as the incense gently rises to heaven, our prayers also rise to God as something sweet and pleasant.



Another ancient use of incense that has also become part of our Catholic tradition is the idea that when we incense something, it's because it is something special or sacred. This is why the Book of the Gospel is incensed during the Liturgy of the Word and the bread, wine, priest celebrant, and congregation are incensed at the presentation of the gifts. To this, we can also add the incensing of the Blessed Sacrament during eucharistic

adoration and benediction, and the body of the deceased at the end of the Mass of the Resurrection (the Funeral Mass).

LIVE THE LITURGY

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

How is your Lent going so far? In changing the circumstances and order of our lives a bit, perhaps we can hear God's voice more clearly and drink more deeply of graced moments we experience. Having God as a friend always involves several things. First, there is God's call. We become attuned to the echo of God's voice in the depth of our souls calling and beckoning us to listen. Second, there is a request. We begin to see that God asks us to do certain things, to order our lives a particular way, and become more intentional in the choices we make. Third, there is trust. Do we trust this call and request? Trust commits us to the relationship and makes a claim on who we are. Finally, we are asked to act. We find ourselves acting, not in the way we used to, but in a transformed, more enlightened way. Things seem clearer and all that is around us shines with the brilliance of God's presence. God's call came through a cloud, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him," This is the call and the request. Can we give God our trust and do as God asks?



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2nd SUNDAY OF LENT



GOSPEL MEDITATION

ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

A pregnant woman was walking in the store and met an old friend. Her friend exclaimed, "You are absolutely beaming!" The new life God placed in her womb radiated throughout her body. It was brightly visible on her face and in her eyes. Transformation and change usually happen from the inside out. It is very rare that simply imposing structure from the outside does any good. Yes, it is true that routines and habits can change when things are done differently. But, for this change to last there has to be an interior renewal and metamorphosis as well. Simply regulating behavior and bringing someone into conformity with accepted protocols doesn't mean their heart and soul come with them.

Peter was a homeless man who lived in a very remote and rudimentary tent community. He was happy to make his daily trip to McDonald's and always welcomed a gift card or two so that he could buy some coffee and something to eat. A generous advocate worked to secure him an apartment in hopes of moving Peter out of his makeshift housing and into something safer. Peter finally got the grand tour of his new "digs," received his own key, remarked how wonderful the place



was, closed the door behind him when they left and never returned. He preferred his tent. No matter how much things changed on the outside, Peter was happy where he was. A poignant lesson was learned that day.

How is your Lent going? By now you ought to have a sense of whether you're really "into it." This year and something transformational is happening. For many, it's only the stuff on the outside that changes for a few weeks and then they return to business as usual. For others, there are some real inner changes happening that are deepening

their relationships with God, others, self, and creation. If we are serious about moving to a new place and radiating with the presence of new life and joy, then we have to clear the way to listen for God's call. Then there is God's request to change things up a bit and order our lives differently. After realizing we have been called and given a mission, we have to trust that this is where we need to be. And then, after all of this hard work we are asked to act. The fruit that is revealed will indicate whether our journey is authentic. The brilliance of conversion will begin to shine on our faces as we contemplate the One to whom we are asked to listen.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. - Mk 9:2-3

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3 EASY STEPS

TO KEEPING YOURSELF & OTHERS HEALTHY!

We are cautioned to be especially careful during the Coronavirus outbreak. Here are some simple ways to keep sickness away.



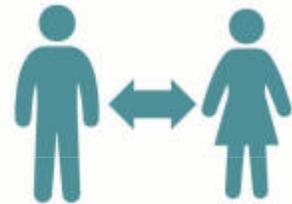
WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer frequently.



DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE

Especially around the eyes, nose and mouth. If you must sneeze, use a tissue or your arm.



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Practice social distancing during this epidemic and stay away from large groups. Instead, call, email or check up on family and friends using social media.

**GOD IS WAITING
FOR YOU.**

POPE FRANCIS

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Kids Corner

READ THE
GOSPEL &
COLOR



Start with a pile of blocks. Add your imagination and you can build a castle or a city. You can change that pile of blocks to look completely different and wonderful. In today's Gospel, Jesus was completely changed. He started out looking like an ordinary man. Then, right in front of Peter, James and John, something happened. Jesus glowed brightly like the sun. Even his clothes became bright white. Talk about changing into something different and wonderful! God let Peter, James and John see Jesus as he looks now in heaven.

PRAYER

God, I can hardly wait to see Jesus glowing in heaven.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Make some lemonade with your family. Then add food coloring to completely change the way it looks. As you mix the ingredients together, talk about how Jesus was completely changed.

Monday, Mar 01, 2021
Lenten Weekday

Pope Francis called mercy the "beating heart of the gospel." Mercy is forbearance, divine favor, compassionate treatment of the distressed and undeserving. It's another word for God's love. Consider showing devotion to it by reciting the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, a rosary-based prayer that was received by Saint Faustina, a Polish nun in the 1930s, through visions of Jesus. Divine Mercy Sunday is celebrated the week after Easter, but many make the Chaplet part of their regular Lenten practice by reciting it every day at 3 p.m. (the traditional hour of Christ's death). You can find the Chaplet on the website.

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 9:4b-10; Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday, Mar 02, 2021
Lenten Weekday

Women's History Month celebrates well-known women but also unsung heroines. How appropriate, then, that today is the feast of Agnes of Bohemia, a lesser-known saint. First cousin of Elizabeth of Hungary—and descendent of Good King Wenceslaus—Agnes came upon her vocation naturally. She built a hospital for the poor, a Franciscan friary, and a monastery for Poor Clare nuns. When she also became a nun and was urged to become abbess, she referred to herself only as "senior sister." She continued to cook for her sisters and mend the clothing of lepers rather than live a royal life. Celebrate the unsung heroines in your life.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 1:10, 16-20;
Matthew 23:1-12*

Wednesday, Mar 03, 2021
Optional Memorial Of Katharine Drexel,
Religious Founder

Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) is a saint for our time. Born into a successful Philadelphia banking family, she used her wealth to improve the lives of others. Her Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament devoted their lives to education of Native and African Americans, building more than 100 schools in cities, rural areas, and on reservations. Though Katharine and her sisters at times faced criticism, endured racist taunts, and were threatened by the Ku Klux Klan, they remained steadfast in their mission. Patron saint of racial justice and philanthropy, Saint Katharine epitomizes the sacrifice of the Blessed Sacrament. How will you commit your own life to making the world more just?

*TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 18:18-20;
Matthew 20:17-28*

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Thursday, Mar 04, 2021
Optional Memorial Of Casimir

Saint Casimir seemed destined for riches and power, but this patron saint of Poland, called the Peacemaker, took a different path. Born in 1458 to the king and queen of Poland, he was a devout, ascetic child. At age 14 his father had him lead an army to install himself as king of Hungary, but with an overpowering enemy and troops beginning to desert, Casimir instead returned home. His furious father exiled him, but Casimir would never again take up arms. Rejecting violence when those around you embrace it can take great inner strength. Cultivate an inner compass that can pursue peace despite pressure.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 17:5-10;
Luke 16:19-31*

Friday, Mar 05, 2021
Lenten Weekday; Day Of Abstinence

Prayer is our life with God. Sometimes we carve out a particular time during the day, and sometimes there are specific words, images, or experiences that help us be more aware of or express our relationship with God. And so of course during Lent prayer is one of the pillars, along with fasting and almsgiving, that help us turn to God. On today's 2021 Day of Prayer, an ecumenical observance, we are invited to "Build on a strong foundation." This theme comes from the women of Vanuatu, an island hit by Cyclone Harold in 2020. Despite the perils they faced—and we've all faced in a year of pandemic—the message of today's prayer is one of confidence in God's steadfastness and the rock of faith. Unite in prayer for healing and recovery.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a;
Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46*

Saturday, Mar 06, 2021
Lenten Weekday

The Parable of the Prodigal Son could as easily be called the Parable of the Bitter Brother. The story might have ended with the celebration at the return of the repentant prodigal. But instead we are left to ponder the feelings of the "good son," the obedient one who followed all the rules but never got a party thrown in his honor. It's a very human story, reenacted in nearly every family in one form or another. "Mother always liked you best." "You were Dad's favorite." "All we ever did was bail you out of trouble." Will the bitter brother in the gospel story reconcile? Has bitterness or division in your own family been reconciled? Consider being the reconciler who brings it about.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20;
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32*

February

febrero

Mass Intentions

Weekend of February 27th & 28th
2nd Sunday of Lent

✘ Conrad Nichols
For the People of St Stevens

✘ George Longino

Monday March 1st

Perpetual

Tuesday March 2nd

✘ Marie Tu Thi Dang

Wednesday March 3rd

✘ Thomas Smedley

Thursday March 4th

✘ Phyllis Sadler

Friday March 5th

✘ Ella & Emmett Smith

Weekend of March 6th & 7th
3rd Sunday of Lent

✘ Leighton Nickerson
For the People of St Stevens

✘ Quinn & Hass Family

Mass streamed Weekdays at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday at 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

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MASS & CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekdays:

Tuesday & Thursday 8:00 a.m.

Weekends:

Saturday 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Adoration Chapel: Tues. & Thurs.

8:30, 9:30, 10:30 a.m.,

1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

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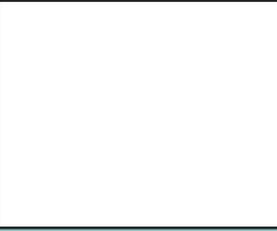
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