

Sunday, Feb 25, 2018

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

By special invitation

Who do you bring along when something special is about to happen? We know Jesus took his inner circle: Peter, James, and John. But on one particular outing, that favored grouping expanded into the Jewish equivalent of a fantasy dinner party, with Moses and Elijah pulling up a chair. No wonder Peter was tempted to linger. And he wasn't wrong: Pitching a tent with iconic teachers of Law and Prophecy is a great idea. Be a student of religious teaching, to appreciate human boundaries. Be a student of prophecy to know when boundaries must be surpassed.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31b-34; Mark 9:2-10 (26). *"Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."*

Monday, Feb 26, 2018

LENTEN WEEKDAY

How do you measure up?

In biblical times getting a fair measure of grain at the market meant that the seller had to fill to overflowing the bushel that was used, then press down and shake the grain, repeating the process until the bushel was packed tight. The amount was then poured into the hem of the buyer's garment, to be carried to its destination. Cheaters undoubtedly existed, but they would be discovered soon enough and punished. Though the technology of the marketplace has changed since biblical times, the ethical principles remain the same: Be honest in your business dealings, whether large or small. You'll sleep better at night and prosper better by day!

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 9:4b-10; Luke 6:36-38 (230). *"A good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap."*

Tuesday, Feb 27, 2018

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Be a Lenten do-gooder

Today's gospel reading from Matthew gives us Lent in a nutshell: "Make yourselves clean, cease to do evil, learn to do good." The spiritual rewards for following this Lenten regimen are great. That's why so many of us try—but, sadly, too many of us fail. Our biggest stumbling block seems to be the final step of learning to do good. It's not that we don't know how to be good; we simply fail to make doing good a consistent, regular practice. This Lent, try following these steps toward becoming a daily do-gooder: Volunteer in your parish or community, be helpful and available to family and friends, donate money to charity, act cheerful—even when you're not.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 1:10, 16-20; Matthew 23:1-12 (231). *"Make yourselves clean; cease to do evil, learn to do good."*

Wednesday, Feb 28, 2018

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Listen for the prophetic voice

The Israelites knew one thing about their prophets: They spoke the true word of God whether the message was welcome or not—and frequently it wasn't, even to the point of eliminating the prophet to still the voice they didn't wish to hear. Jesus encountered opposition as well. Plenty of people—especially

powerful people—wanted to get him out of the way, but he and his gospel live on. Do you hear prophetic words spoken today in our world? How are they received? How do *you* receive them?

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 18:18-20; Matthew 20:17-28 (232).

"Instruction shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet."

Thursday, Mar 01, 2018

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Heartfelt advice

Sometimes you have to hear messages several times before they sink in, even ones that could save your life. "Don't text and drive." "Eat healthy food." "Get enough sleep." When you do hear the messages, you might be tempted to ignore them because to act on them may be inconvenient or take away time from your other responsibilities. But in the end it's in your own best interest as well as those around you to take life-saving information to heart. That includes the many things from the rich Christian tradition. "Trust God." "Be faithful." "Love your neighbor as yourself." Which will you take to heart today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 17:5-10; Luke 16:19-31 (233). *"If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead."*

Friday, Mar 02, 2018

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Stick with the important stuff

Remember the treasure hunts of childhood—running around and trying to find something hidden away? Sometimes the clues given were obvious and sometimes they were confusing. But what a feeling when we found what we searched for. How we live our lives gives us clues to what we treasure. Lent helps us look at those clues more clearly. What are the treasures in our hearts? Abstain from the frivolous and find what is important—the love of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46 (234). *"The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."*

Saturday, Mar 03, 2018

MEMORIAL OF KATHARINE DREXEL, VIRGIN, RELIGIOUS FOUNDER

Extend the circle of love

Born into a wealthy Philadelphia family, Saint Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) eventually spent her large inheritance in founding a religious order, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, and establishing schools and missions for Native Americans and African Americans, including Xavier University in New Orleans, the only predominantly black Catholic institution of higher learning in the United States. The sisters continue Mother Drexel's work today through prayer, counseling, education, health care, social work, and other works of mercy, especially in connection with the poor and oppressed and among Native American, African American, and Haitian peoples. Ahead of her time, Mother Drexel had a special concern for excluded people. Is there someone like that you can reach out to today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (235). *"Everything I have is yours."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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