

# The Promise *is* Fulfilled



Lent 2025



CENTURY OF SERVICE



THE

MADELEINE

PARISH & SCHOOL



*Dear Madeleine family and friends,*

*The promise made by prophets long ago is about to be fulfilled as we follow Jesus through his life here on earth, his death and resurrection. During these forty days of Lent we will look at Jesus as he is described by the prophet Isaiah: Jesus the Wonderful Counselor, Jesus the Mighty God, Jesus the Everlasting Father, Jesus the Prince of Peace, Jesus Our Wisdom, and finally Jesus Our Savior.*

*The Sunday meditations are based on the gospel readings for the day and are meant to be shared. The daily reflections can be shared or thought about privately.*

*Our writers come from a variety of experiences, from elementary to high school to graduate students. Some are just beginning their careers and others are exploring the years of retirement. The one thing they have in common is their special relationship with God.*

*A heartfelt thank you to our writers, our editors and our publisher. Once again, we are blessed with the artwork of Hugh Hammons who brings the Lenten theme visually alive. All this would not be possible without the blessing of our faithful leader, Fr. Bonaventure.*

*May you walk prayerfully through these forty days and may these reflections help to prepare you to celebrate the Joy of Easter and the Fulfillment of the Promise.*

*Marilyn Robb*

# Eyelash to Eyelash

ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6—2Corinthians 5:20b “Be reconciled to God.”

“Reconciled.” From “Re-” meaning “again,” and “concilia” meaning “come together,” like a council. But, splitting it apart, “con” means “together” and “cilia” means “eyelash.” To reconcile is to come “eyelash to eyelash.” God longs to bring us eyelash to eyelash with him, into total union bound by perfect love. At Mass, we hear his loving words to us, we practice speaking loving words to him and to others, and he invites us to draw infinitely close to him in the Eucharist. This Lent, look for the Lord in the Liturgy—see how he brings you eyelash to eyelash with himself.

*God, may we remain forever close to you. Amen.*

—LAUREN CRAIG

## Jesus’ Lenten Teachings

THURSDAY, MARCH 7—Psalm 27:11a “Teach me your way, O Lord.”

Sometimes I need God to teach me stuff. For example, when I’m losing my temper, I need God to help me calm down. In the bible, Jesus calms down a storm. That teaches me Jesus can help calm me down when things don’t go my way. Jesus promised to return to Earth one day. When that promise is fulfilled, I will rejoice because he rises above all—like I will do to things that make me angry. Sometimes, we all need to follow Jesus even if it’s hard.

*Help me to follow you, Jesus, especially when it is not easy.  
Amen.*

—MARLEE NGUYEN, GRADE 4

# The Waiting Time

FRIDAY, MARCH 8—Psalm 27:14 “Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart.”

Waiting is one of my least favorite things to do. I much prefer taking some kind of action. So it is hard for me to wait for the Lord’s direction, let alone be strong and take heart as I wait. I know God hears my prayers but I become impatient and anxious when I can’t discern his answers. God urges me to stay with him, to be brave in the face of challenges, to always know that he loves me and to have hope as I wait for his direction. May I use this waiting time to help me draw nearer to him.

*Lord help me grow closer to You. Amen.*

—JENNY HUNTER

## Words and Thoughts Through God

SATURDAY, MARCH 9—Psalm 19:15 “Let the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart find favor with you, O Lord.”

As a high school student, I often find myself navigating complex social dynamics, academic pressures, and personal growth. In these moments, Psalm 19:15 serves as a guiding light. It reminds me to align my speech and inner reflections with values that honor God. Whether I’m engaging in conversations with friends, participating in class discussions, or posting on social media, this verse encourages me to communicate with kindness and integrity. By doing so, I not only strengthen my relationship with God but also positively impact those around me by living a life that reflects his love.

*Lord, may my thoughts and words always honor you. Amen.*

—SIDDHARTH MODHA

# First Sunday in Lent

MARCH 10, 2025

## *Jesus the Wonderful Counselor*

### Introduction

I met Cara in the courtyard of the Madeleine on a lovely summer evening. People had gathered to sip wine, enjoy food and visit after vespers to celebrate the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene. As we got to know each other, Cara shared with me that she was at a crossroads in her life. She had just been given a clean bill of health after a lengthy battle with cancer. As part of her new beginning, she had decided to join the Catholic Church. Before the evening was over, I had volunteered to be her sponsor and walk with her to Easter and witness her confirmation. Her enthusiasm for this new adventure was contagious. But as so often happens when we make a commitment to grow closer to God, our faith is challenged... just like Jesus was challenged after his baptism. A few weeks after I met Cara, her Cancer returned. But this has given her a chance to know Jesus as a wonderful counselor as he walks beside her daily guiding and upholding her with his love.

**Share:** How has Jesus, the wonderful counselor, guided you through challenging times?

† **Read: Luke 4:1-13**

**Share:** Comment on “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”  
How do we test God today?

## Commentary

During this first week of Lent, we will focus on Jesus as a wonderful counselor. Jesus came to earth with the special gifts he had been given by his Father. His gift as a counselor was challenged immediately after his baptism when Satan tempted him in the desert. But Jesus was prepared for the battle. He had the knowledge and the strength to be victorious over his adversary. Satan was fully aware of the human weaknesses that Jesus had taken on when he joined us here on earth. But Jesus remained strong.

**Share:** What human weaknesses make us easy targets for Satan today?

## Reflection

What burdens are you carrying these days? What earthly challenges are distancing you from God? What worldly distractions are more important than a quiet conversation with your personal, wonderful counselor? As we travel together through this first week of Lent, hopefully the scripture verses and reflections shared by our writers, will encourage you to take a closer look at your life and accept the love and guidance of Jesus, our wonderful counselor.

**Share:** Name some of the burdens and challenges of life today that keep people away from God.

*Prayer: Jesus, our wonderful counselor, may we know that you are always eager to walk with us through the challenges of this life. Thank you, Amen.*

*“The thing I said to my kids as they were growing up was ‘things will work out.’”*



# Courage and Strength

MONDAY, MARCH 10—Psalm 91:2 “Say to the Lord, ‘My refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust.’”

This past year I was presented with a number of challenges and sorrows, including the untimely death of my daughter-in-law. However, over the many years of my life, I have learned that when circumstances seem most dire, when tasks appear daunting, the only one who can truly understand the depth of my thoughts or the pain in my heart is our Lord. He is the constant companion that I can turn to in any situation no matter how dire, enabling me to carry on with daily activities rather than drown in the darkness of despair. We should never be afraid to reach out, for he is always there for us.

*Thank you, Lord, for replacing my sadness with joy through your constant love. Amen.*

—GRETCHEN STEVENSON

## “Things Will Work Out”

TUESDAY, MARCH 11—Psalm 91:15a “If you call on me, I will answer you. I will be with you in time of distress.”

This verse is from the wonderful and reassuring Psalm 91, which inspired the hymn *On Eagle’s Wings*. The challenge of this psalm is that our human experience does frequently expose us to the very things from which this psalm says God protects us! We get sick, have conflicts—I dashed my foot on the curb just yesterday. The thing I said to my kids as they were growing up was “things will work out.” Confidence in God’s ability to work things out for the best for us leads to unexpected blessings.

When we cast our burdens unto the Lord, he does honor and sustain us.

*Lord, may I know that you hear my call and will always be with me. Amen.*

—TERESA NIPPOLT

# Laying It All Into God's Hands

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12—John 14:1 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith in me.”

I find that in my most troubling and challenging times, spending time in prayer has always brought me comfort. I often try to find a place where I can quiet myself in hopes of finding peace and joy in the silence. Sometimes, trying to understand the “why” when dealing with hardships can be difficult for me but I am always led back to putting all of my fears and concerns into God's hands. I have faith that nothing is too big for God and that he will guide me through whatever obstacle I am facing.

*O Lord, my God, I place my fears and concerns in your hands.  
Amen.*

—TRIEU NGUYEN

## An Invitation

THURSDAY, MARCH 13—Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all of you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Jesus invites me to take his yoke and learn from him and I will find rest for my soul. This does not mean an end to burdens, trials and anxieties, but rather sharing them with Jesus. Through this, I can experience his transformative love and find rest for my soul. I share the yoke with Jesus and come to him just as I am.

Just as I am, You will receive,  
Will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because Your promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

*Charlotte Elliott, 1835*

*Jesus, I choose to share my burden with you. Amen.*

—RON OLIVER

# Jesus, the Powerful Teacher

FRIDAY, MARCH 14—Mark 11:24 “I tell you, all that you ask for in prayer, believe that you will receive it and it shall be yours.”

I am reminded of the song from Garth Brooks, “Unanswered Prayers,” where a man’s plea to God goes unanswered, only to be met with a far greater blessing, leaving him grateful his original prayer wasn’t fulfilled.

Mark 11:24 reminds us of the power of prayer and faith and the call to believe in him. It is the assurance that even when answers don’t come in the way or timing we expect, our prayers are always heard, and God is always working.

As our Powerful Teacher, Jesus teaches us to bring our faith before God with open hearts, trusting that the answers whether immediate or unseen are always part of his greater plan.

*Give me patience and understanding God, as I wait for you to answer my prayers. Amen.*

—GINA SHANER, OCIA CANDIDATE

# Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor

SATURDAY, MARCH 15—2 Thessalonians 3:3 “The Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.”

During Lent, we reflect on the truth that The Promise is Fulfilled in Jesus. He came to us, offering his life for our sins so that we’ll be saved. Today, we look at the attribute: Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor.

A counselor is someone who listens and provides help. Jesus is the wonderful Counselor because he offers comfort and direction in the middle of life’s crises. During Lent, let us turn to Jesus as our Counselor so we can trust that he will help us through any challenges as he gives us the strength to maintain our faith in him.

*Jesus our counselor, we place our trust in you. Amen.*

—LUCY KRUG, STUDENT

# Second Sunday in Lent

MARCH 17, 2025

## *Jesus The Mighty God*

### Introduction

Last summer my daughter and I spent several days at a friend's cabin near Mt. Hood. As soon as the car was unpacked and things put away, we entered into an unstructured, timeless space of peaceful quiet. The only sound was the river dancing over the rocks and an occasional bird call. We both had writing to do but had set no goals. For three days we separated ourselves from the world and placed ourselves in the presence of God. We enjoyed long conversations in the morning over hot coffee, homemade bread and fresh fruit from a local orchard. The evenings were endless as we sat around the fire in awe of the star-studded sky. When it was time to pack up and go down the mountain, I knew how Peter must have felt after the transfiguration. I found myself searching through the forest for a rock, a moss-covered branch or a wildflower. I wanted a visible piece of God to take back into the world, but God cannot be contained or made visible. God remains the invisible part of us...always dancing with our souls and shining through us like sunlight through the forest.

**Share:** When and where do you experience God's presence?

† **Read: Luke 9:28b-36**

**Share:** What is it about God that frightens you...in the past, in the present, or in the future?

## Commentary

It is difficult to think of the gentle, loving man we know as Jesus, having the same power and glory as his father, the Almighty God. But by following Jesus up the mountain...by doing what Jesus had asked them to do...Peter, James and John were privileged to see Jesus, God's Son, in his completeness. Since this was before cell phones, they were unable to capture the experience, except with some man-made physical structure. But God cannot be captured. Perhaps it is God who chooses to capture us!

**Share:** How do you capture God or how does God capture you?

## Reflection

We can think of this second week of Lent as a time to put the pieces of a puzzle together or perhaps find our way through a maze. Can we figure out the identity of Jesus, the Mighty God? Who is this God who has control over the storms of our lives, yet waits to enter the quiet chamber of our hearts? Go back to your childhood and remember the Jesus you knew from the very beginning. Is that the same Jesus you know and love today?

**Share:** Describe the Jesus/God you first knew.

*Prayer: Jesus, our Almighty God, may we never cease to learn more about you and grow closer to you. Amen.*

*“To be strong in our faith  
is hard amid all the many  
distractions and frustrations  
around us.”*

# Snowing, Swirling, Stirring

MONDAY, MARCH 17 (ST. PATRICK'S)—Psalm 27:9 “Your presence  
O Lord I seek. Hide not your face from me.”

I am writing this on February 13, anticipating the feast of St. Patrick on March 17. It is snowing today. I feel God's presence as I write, watch, feel

Swirling clouds of Snow  
Silence blessing the earth  
Peace stirring within me

I pray St. Patrick's prayer: “Christ be with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me.” How will you open to the presence of Christ with, before, behind you today?

*May peace stir within you. Amen.*

—THERESE FENZL

## Promise in Galilee

TUESDAY, MARCH 18—Luke 8:25 “They were amazed and said to one another, ‘Who then is this who commands even the winds and the sea, and they obey him?’”

Imagine the utter silence on the Sea of Galilee after Jesus calmed the water and stilled the wind that day. As we meditate on Jesus, our Mighty God, it is good to remember that Jesus did not prevent the storm, the intense winds or the high waves, but tested the faith of his disciples in those moments. We as well, are tested through the storms, winds and waves of our lives and can be assured of God's love for us and the promise of eternal life, even in our humanity, our uncertainty, and even sometimes, our shaken faith. God's promise is enduring forever. Have courage!

*Mighty God, may we always turn to you to calm the storms of our lives. Amen.*

—DAVE ALBERTINE

# Despair ...

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19—Psalm 46:11 “Be still and know that I am God.”

Sometimes we experience an overwhelming sense of hopelessness – the recognition that our situation or we ourselves seem beyond fixing. It’s a frightening state of mind. Our souls understand Jesus’ calling, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

God’s response is clear, true, and practical: “Be still and know that I am God.” Quiet now. Despair never triumphs. Wait for me. I Am.

*Great “I AM”, may we always find you in the silence. Amen.*

—DEACON MIKE

# God Can Do the Impossible

THURSDAY, MARCH 20—Luke 18:27 “Then Jesus said, ‘What is impossible for human beings is possible for God.’”

God can do things that humans can not. For example, God made our bodies in very unique ways. He did not have instructions for anyone. He did it from scratch. This makes me feel happy that there is only one of me. However, if everyone was me, we would all know the same things. We would not learn anything new, nor come up with different ideas. Maybe you can think of a way that God does the impossible in your life. Try it today!

*Thank you God, for making the impossible possible. Amen.*

—HANK SHAMRELL, GRADE 3



# To Love God

FRIDAY, MARCH 21—Romans 8:28 “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God.”

In loving God we have the ability to love others. It is through our faith that we say yes to God in opportunities to serve others. That is to include family, friends, acquaintances and strangers. Each day is a gift from God and it is with care that we make choices in order to serve God and give thanks for our blessings. To be strong in our faith is hard amid all the many distractions and frustrations around us. Looking for glimpses of Heaven each day in those around us and in the world brings joy. It is easy to focus on the negative but with Christ in our lives we can instead focus on that which is divine.

*Fill me with your love, and help me to share it with others.  
Amen.*

—CAROL BAIER

# Jesus the Mighty God

SATURDAY, MARCH 22—Romans 8:31 “What then shall we say to this?  
If God is for us who can be against us?”

This reading reminds me to think how our human experiences are part of God’s greater plan and those who are against us personally or as Christians cannot derail those plans.

Romans 8:31 is a reminder that we have someone greater than we can comprehend in our corner watching over us. Who can bring condemnation against Christians? No one, God is for us and he is the only one who can judge.

Jesus the Mighty God is so powerful and through his actions saved humanity. If he is on our side, nothing else can overpower that.

*Jesus, our mighty God, may we never forget that you are always  
on our side. Amen.*

—CONNOR RAW, OCIA CANDIDATE

# Third Week in Lent

MARCH 27, 2025

## *Jesus the Everlasting Father*

### Introduction

My father died suddenly when I was six years old, and I never developed a father-daughter relationship with my stepfather. I look at photos of myself with my birth father and try to remember those early years and the love we must have had for each other. He was not there to teach me how to ride a bike. He was not there to take me on fishing trips or guide me up the trails in the Wallowa Mountains. He never got to feel proud when I sang a solo with the children's choir. He was not there to question every boy I dated or console me at the break-up of a romance. He was not there to walk me down the aisle at my wedding or hold his first grandchild. He did not get to fulfill his role as an enduring, compassionate, provider and protector. When Isaiah describes the promised Messiah, Jesus, he says he will be like and everlasting father. He will be an enduring and compassionate provider and protector.

**Share:** How did/does Jesus fulfill this role?

† **Read: Luke 13:1-19**

**Share:** What kind of care will it take for the Fig Tree to survive?

## Commentary

What must the gardener do to make the fig tree healthy enough so it will again produce fruit? He plans to give the tree extra attention. He will cultivate the ground around it. He will nurture it with fertilizer. He will keep it watered so it doesn't dry up. He will protect it from harmful insects and disease. He will trust that God will provide the sun to give it needed light. The gardener probably asked for the help of others to give the tree the attention it needed. Jesus doesn't tell us how the story ends. I hope the tree is successful.

**Share:** Do you have a successful gardening story to tell?

## Reflection

This third week of Lent we think about Jesus in the person of the Everlasting Father. We are his children. We are like the fig tree. We will only grow and produce fruit under the loving care and attention of the Everlasting Father. But as a child growing up without a father, I have realized that many other people stepped in to give me the attention I needed. People who prepared the environment around me. People who nurtured me with love and kept me from the evils of this world. Is God recruiting you to help someone grow?

**Share:** What have you learned from the story of the Fig Tree?

*Prayer: Help me to care for all growing things, especially your children, both young and old. Amen.*

*“For 34 years, I lived in  
darkness... This past year,  
I felt the Lord’s light in  
profound ways...”*

# Showing God's Love and Patience to Others

MONDAY, MARCH 24—Psalm 103:8 “Merciful and gracious is the Lord,  
slow to anger and abounding in love.”

His love for us is so great, that he would rather keep us close just as we are rather than lose us. Do you have patience and love for people you really don't like only because they are special to the one you love? Let us try to show love and patience toward those we don't like only because they are very special to our Lord. He loves them with unconditional love—maybe for reasons only known to him. If we love our Lord, we should also love those he loves just to please him.

*Teach me to love like you, Lord. Amen.*

—NORRIS & VIVIANE HIBBLER

## Take a Step

TUESDAY, MARCH 25 (ANNUNCIATION)—Hebrews 10:10 “We have been  
consecrated through the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

When invited by the prophet Isaiah to ask for a sign, Ahaz, king of Israel, sloughed it off. “I will not ask. I will not tempt the Lord.”

Mary, invited by an angel to play the key role in God's really big deal, is stunned, yet ready to engage. “How shall this be?” Gabriel tells her this invitation comes with the Spirit's power.

Her whole hearted “Let it be done” sets her on an adventure beyond her imagination. She becomes the sign Ahaz was unwilling to ask of God.

How might God be inviting you to take a step powered by Spirit?

*When I hear your invitation, God, may your Spirit guide me to  
take the first step. Amen.*

—JOAN SPIERING, RGS

# My Wish and Prayer Is for Everybody

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26—Ephesians 5:1, 2b “Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love.”

This week’s theme, “Jesus the Everlasting Father,” tells us that we are loved forever and ever. Being a mother I know unconditional love for my children and grandchildren. That doesn’t mean that I always agree with them, we make mistakes on both sides, but it does mean that I will always love them and support them in any way that I can. I also had an incredible love and respect for my parents. That love helps me, in some very small way, just BEGIN to understand the love that Jesus has for me, and not only for me, but for EVERYBODY. That is hard to fathom, but I believe that is true. My wish and prayer is that EVERYBODY would come to believe that to be true.

*Everlasting Father, as your children, teach us to love. Amen.*

—TUNI GARRIGUES

## Jesus, the Everlasting Father

THURSDAY, MARCH 27—Ephesians 5:8 “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.”

For 34 years, I lived in darkness, disconnected from my faith. This past year, I felt the Lord’s light in profound ways—from his comfort during my grandmother’s passing to my sister’s steadfast support and prayers. The light was always there; I just hadn’t recognized it. Finding my way to The Madeleine Parish and my OCIA group has been a blessing beyond measure. Surrounded by this radiant community, I feel the light shining ever brighter on me, guiding me toward a deeper relationship with God. I am filled with gratitude for this journey of faith and renewal.

*Heavenly Father, may others see your light burning within me. Amen.*

—ANTHONY PEPE, OCIA CANDIDATE

# Come to Me

FRIDAY, MARCH 28—Matthew 19:14 “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

Jesus, the Everlasting Father, welcomes us with open arms, just as he did the children in Matthew 19:14. His love is not distant or conditional—it is constant, patient, and ever-present. In him, we find a Father who nurtures, protects, and calls us to trust like children, embracing the kingdom of heaven with open hearts. As we journey through Lent, may we rest in the promise that his love never fades, his mercy never wavers, and his invitation remains: Come to me. In Jesus, the Everlasting Father, the promise is fulfilled.

*Thank you, Jesus, for your unending mercy and love. Amen.*

—TRESA RAST, PRINCIPAL

# Dad

SATURDAY, MARCH 29—Psalm 103:13 “As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who honor him.”

Throughout scripture God is called our father, our Dad (Abba). This dramatically confirms that with God we can ask for help, complain of injustice, hang out, talk things over, listen, enjoy our world, give thanks, ask for advice, lay our heads on God’s shoulder, feel God’s presence, name our failings, ignore God, run away from God and run back to God. Even if we run away and hide, God has compassion on us. According to Jesus, God is like the prodigal’s father, who, upon his return declares a feast and celebration. As a father of three, I have experienced these things with my own children, and I know of my love and compassion for them. How much more, God...

*Abba, Father, may I always feel comfortable with you. Amen.*

—BILL HUNTER

# Fourth Sunday in Lent

MARCH 30, 2025

## *Jesus The Prince of Peace*

### Introduction

As a young girl, I was trained to be a Pharisee by my mother and her three sisters. I not only knew the Ten Commandments, but I was well acquainted with the rules of the church. Often, on Saturday afternoons, I would accompany my mother to our church and sit quietly in the front pew while she prepared the altar for Sunday worship. I was not allowed into the Holy area behind the communion rail. I watched in silent reverence as my mother, in her apron and white gloves, arranged the flowers, placed the linen cloths, and made sure there were no fingerprints on the precious brass candle holders or cross. My mother and her sisters taught me the rules by pointing out to me the “bad” people who were not obeying the rules. It took me many years before I understood Jesus’ message in the story of the prodigal son. To me the prodigal son always got what he deserved by leaving his father and living a life of sin. I never got to the homecoming and the celebration of forgiveness.

**Share:** What rules in your life have changed over the years?

† **Read: Luke 15:1-3, 11-32**

**Share:** What message was Jesus sending to the Pharisees in this parable?



## Commentary

This fourth week of Lent, we think about Jesus as the Prince of Peace. Even though he was constantly being challenged by the Pharisees for not obeying their rules or being seen hanging out with the wrong people, he usually came up with a clever and peaceful response. Often that response was in the form of a story or parable. When he was accused of hanging out with tax collectors and sinners, he tells the story of a loving father who welcomes his sinful, lost son home with open arms and a joyful celebration.

**Share:** How has Jesus brought peace into your life?

## Reflection

Jesus came to earth to be our Prince of Peace. He broke the rules that the Jewish people had been following for centuries. He modeled a life that no longer needed a list of rules. It was a life of love and peace. All rules vanish if we live as Jesus told us to live: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind...and your neighbor as yourself.” Make a special effort this fourth week of Lent to put these rules into practice and become even closer to “Jesus the Prince of Peace.”

*Prayer: Jesus, help us daily, to share your love and peace. Amen*

“...you don't always have to be perfect, but God asks us to try for a better relationship.”

# Unity in Diversity

MONDAY, MARCH 31—Romans 14:19 “Let us then pursue what leads to peace and the building up of one another.”

In Romans, Chapter 14, St Paul spreads peace amongst those arguing about minor differences: what to eat, which are holy days. He reminds us that whatever we do, let’s do it “for the Lord.” In my life, I am asked to humbly serve my family, meeting each member where they are, daily, asking, “how can I best support you?” I am called to serve my neighborhood and community compassionately, putting myself in others’ shoes, in their reality. To please the Lord and seek eternal life, I am asked to willingly emulate Christ’s dying to self for the needs of others.

*May I fulfill the needs of others as I strive to live a life of peace.  
Amen.*

—STEPHANIE FERNANDES

# Jesus Stops the Noise

TUESDAY, APRIL 1—Colossians 3:15a “Let the peace of Christ control your hearts.”

I am writing this reflection past its due date as usual, but I believe there’s a reason why. I work for a Federal agency in a job I treasure—great people, meaningful work, and until last week, fully reliable. While the job remains for now, there is so much noise from unknowns and supposition that finding any quiet is challenging, and keeping frustration at bay even more difficult. This verse from Colossians reminds me, in this real-time moment, that Jesus can stop the noise as long as I let him in my heart

*Christ, help me to live a life that reflects your peace. Amen.*

—ERIN COUCH

# Half the Blanket

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2—Hebrews 12:14a “Strive for peace with everyone.”

I have conflicts with my brother almost every day and this verse makes me think about how I could make peace with him. This verse tells us that you don't always have to be perfect, but God asks us to try for a better relationship. I can seek to make peace with my brother by apologizing, or being kind to him first. My brother and I fight over the coziest blanket and sometimes things get a little heated. Next time this happens I will apologize first and make sure he gets at least half of the blanket.

*Help us to live peacefully with each other by sharing our gifts.  
Amen.*

—JACKSON SHAMRELL, GRADE 5

# Unexpected Peace

THURSDAY, APRIL 3—Psalm 29:11b “May the Lord bless his people with peace.”

Thirty-some years ago when our children were young, we were attending Mass when it was time to share a sign of peace and we all shook hands with others around us. Suddenly our three-year-old older son blurted out loudly, “There's no peas in my hand!” A bit of laughter followed.

I like to think that his innocent complaint was actually a mini-blessing. Who doesn't appreciate a bit of humor in their day? The Lord says he gives us his peace, a peace that passes understanding.

There is his peace all around us—we need only ask for help to discern it in our daily lives.

*Lord, remind us often, that humor can often lead to peace.  
Amen.*

—POLLY MCGRAW

# Peace I Give to You

FRIDAY, APRIL 4—John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”

It was a confusing time. Why would God make me this way, give me these gifts, if I wasn't to use them? Was I a mistake? Going to bed that night I found a small bookmark near my pillow with the words, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.” It was signed, “Love, Mom.” In the days that followed I experienced an awareness of God's gift of peace in my life. I never acknowledged my mom's gift, and we have never spoken of it. Forty years later and I still have that bookmark, and at every Mass I remember that peace again when I hear the words “My peace I give to you.”

*Make us aware of your gift of peace in our lives. Amen.*

—CHRISTI BOHMBACH

# Hope is Essential

SATURDAY, APRIL 5—Romans 15:13a “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace.”

Hope is essential as a follower of Christ and with it comes a joy and peace; not of the world but of our faith in God. We often do not understand the happenings of this world or in our own lives or those we love.

Recently, a friend was experiencing a difficult situation. I prayed for that person, really thinking there was no resolution possible where everyone would feel valued. Finally, I gave it to the Lord. “Sacred heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.” I found joy and peace in giving it to God. Contentment is a rare gift and the ability to experience it is when we center our life in Christ. Trusting is hope in the divine not in our resources or those of the world but of his.

*Christ, you are our hope. In you we find joy and peace. Amen.*

—RON BAIER

# Fifth Sunday in Lent

APRIL 6, 2025

## *Jesus Our Wisdom*

### Introduction

A dear family friend, Gordie, died several years ago. He and his wife Camille had been very close to my husband and me for over twenty-five years. We shared the joys and challenges of raising our children. We shared the laughter and tears of growing old together. Many of the world's problems were solved over glasses of wine around their kitchen table on Sunday afternoons. It was always a rewarding experience to be in Gordie's presence. He had the gift of wisdom which he used well during his career as a teacher and principal. He was an excellent listener and made you feel like what you had to say was important. He was not quick to give an opinion or make a judgment. He was strict but ruled with an understanding, compassionate and loving heart. People would often seek him out for advice.

In Sunday's gospel, Jesus uses his gift of wisdom to save a woman's life and put the Pharisees in their place.

**Share:** Describe a person you know who has the gift of wisdom.

† **Read: John 8:1-11**

**Share:** What do you think the woman did next?

## Commentary

In Sunday's gospel, Jesus is given a chance to show his gift of wisdom when the Jewish leaders bring him a woman caught in adultery. Once again, he is being tested. If he says she should not be punished he is going against the Mosaic law. If he says she should be punished he contradicts his own message of forgiveness and mercy. Jesus takes his time giving an answer and ends up not giving an answer at all. Instead, he puts the ball in their court by asking the person who is without sin to throw the first stone. Everyone leaves and the woman is saved from death.

**Share:** What are your thoughts or comments about this incident?

## Reflection

Whether we think we are wise or not, if we just open ourselves to God, we will have the right answer at the right time. Often, we are quick to make a decision, give an opinion, or take action. What we need to do is pause and think things through. We need to learn to listen with open ears, open minds and open hearts. Practice patience as Jesus did. It took him time to gather his thoughts and say the right words. We all have been given the gift of wisdom. Take time this week to use it.

**Share:** What words of wisdom do you have to share?

*Prayer: Lord be with us and help us to live with wisdom and understanding. Amen*

# Follow the Instructions

MONDAY, APRIL 7—Psalm 51:8 “You Lord desire true sincerity; and secretly you teach me wisdom.”

A few years ago, I tried assembling a piece of furniture without looking at the instructions. I was confident I could figure it out, but after several failed attempts and a few extra screws leftover, I had to admit defeat. Frustrated, I finally opened the manual, and suddenly, everything made sense. Following the instructions, I completed the project easily.

Life is much the same. We often rely on our own understanding, only to struggle. But Jesus, our Wisdom, has already shown us the way. When we seek His guidance, what once seemed impossible becomes clear. This Lent, may we trust His wisdom over our own.

*I trust you Jesus, to always guide me with your wisdom. Amen.*

—DAVOR BRAUT

# Paying Reverence

TUESDAY, APRIL 8—Psalm 11:10 “Reverence for the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

Reverence is Love and Respect for God and all he has created. Profound Reverence comes because Our Creator has all Wisdom and all Power, both in heaven and on earth. Reverence for God is often linked to following his commandments and living a life that honors him.

All Creation is a gift of God. We can pay reverence to God by respecting his creation.

We show respect when we are kind to one another, care for animals, and protect the environment; essentially treating the Earth and its inhabitants with the respect we would give to God himself.

*Lord, watch over us and this world. Amen*

—MAUREEN BAKER



# Walking in the Wisdom of Christ: Trusting the Promise Fulfilled

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9—Isaiah 11:20 “The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; a spirit of wisdom and understanding.”

In Isaiah 11:2, we hear, “The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; a spirit of wisdom and understanding.” This wisdom is not abstract or distant—it is embodied in Jesus, who walks with us in our daily struggles, decisions, and relationships. Jesus’ wisdom isn’t just about having the right answers; it’s about living with compassion, integrity, and trust in God’s plan, even when life feels uncertain.

How often do we seek quick fixes or lean on our own understanding when challenges arise? Lent invites us to pause, to listen for the quiet, guiding voice of Christ’s wisdom in our hearts. In our families, workplaces, and communities, his wisdom teaches us patience when we are frustrated, courage when we are afraid, and grace when we are wronged.

As we move toward Easter, let us trust that The Promise is Fulfilled not just in the grand story of salvation, but in the small, everyday choices we make when we allow Jesus’ wisdom to shape our lives.

*Lord, may our everyday choices be guided by your wisdom.  
Amen.*

—FR. ANTHONY AHAMEFULE

# The Path of Wisdom

THURSDAY, APRIL 10—Luke 2:52 “Jesus grew in wisdom and age, and favor before God and man.”

How do we grow in wisdom?

In dialog with the Pharisees, Jesus experienced a spark of Divine Wisdom yet he returned home in loving obedience to live an ordinary life with his parents. And he grew in wisdom and favor.

Jesus shows me through living an ordinary life I will grow in wisdom and understanding of God’s will. The extraordinary has not satisfied my heart’s desires. In living God’s mission my heart has grown to love and serve him.

*Lord, with your grace and wisdom, help me call out in the night  
“Here I am, I come to do Your Will.”*

—NITA OLIVER

## Reflecting on Current Events

FRIDAY, APRIL 11—Romans 11:33 “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways.”

After an endlessly long shift or a harrying moment on the fireline, we’d shrug and say, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” Fatigue and fear brushed aside, we celebrated resilience in the face of greater powerlessness, tempering unspoken bonds of love, the iron of our strength.

Mulishly perhaps, I believe it’s pointless to query God about the many ills of this world. Rather, if we allow it, the pilgrimage through calamity and injustice offers wisdom and, as Paul notes previously, mercy. It is a tempering fire.

*Lord, we welcome your partnership as we meet the challenges  
of this life. Amen.*

—DAN O’BRIEN

# True Wisdom

SATURDAY, APRIL 12—James 3:13 “Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in humility that comes from wisdom.”

According to our faith, True Wisdom is from God, and grounded in Love (1 Cor 13 : 3) and the Beatitudes (MT : 5).

The epistle says, “If we nurture selfish ambition in our hearts, are arrogant, and making false claims against the Truth; this is not wisdom from above. It is ‘earthbound’, a kind of animal, devilish, cunning, exhibiting all kinds of vile behavior.”

“Wisdom from above, by contrast, is pure, peaceable, accepting, rich in sympathy and the kindly deeds that are its fruits, impartial and sincere.”

It certainly appears that the contrast between True (Godly) Wisdom and earthbound (worldly) wisdom, the Epistle of James described 2,000 years ago is blatantly apparent and particularly threatening today.

*Dear God, through the Holy Spirit dwelling in each of us, help us, to see all things through your Loving eyes, and give us the courage to take action accordingly, with “humility and good sense.” Amen.*

—DARRELL MILLER

# Palm Sunday

APRIL 13, 2025

## *Jesus Our Savior*

### Introduction

If you walk through the Rose Garden at the Catholic Cemetery in Vancouver, Washington, you will come to the columbarium. On that columbarium you will see my name, my date of birth and a space for my date of death. My husband's ashes are already in that dark niche and someday my ashes will be there. I thought about this as a contemplated Holy Week and Christ's journey on earth. We begin our lives in the dark chamber of our mother's womb, and we end our journey in the dark chamber of this earth. When Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimethia placed the body of Jesus in that dark tomb, it was so God's promise could finally be fulfilled. God raised his Son from the dark confines of that tomb, so Jesus could become our Savior. The Savior whose death and resurrection releases us from the dark confines of this world. When my ashes arrive in that columbarium, I will not be there. I will have escaped the darkness and be with God whose Son fulfilled the promise made so long ago.

**Share:** What are your thoughts about birth, life and death?

† **Read: Luke 23:44-55**

**Share:** What do you have to say about the people mentioned in these verses?

## Commentary

During this sixth week of Lent, Holy Week, we walk with Jesus to the end of his journey here on earth. It comforts me to know that Jesus experienced this earthly journey much as we do...from the darkness of Mary's womb to the sunlight and shadows of life. He experienced the same joy and sadness we experience, and because of that, he knows and understands us even better than we know and understand ourselves. The best part is that he loves us and will always be with us until our work on this earth is done.

**Share:** What part of Jesus' life on earth relates to your life?

## Reflection

What is it we can learn this year as we follow Jesus through Holy Week? We can learn humility and service from his example of washing the feet of his disciples. We can learn our importance to him when he asks us to remember him in the bread and wine. We can learn how to pray when we accompany him to Gethsemane. Even though we deny him as Peter did, he will always love us. We can forgive, as he forgave. We can rejoice with praise and thanksgiving, because by his death and resurrection God's promise has been fulfilled.

*Prayer: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia the promise has been fulfilled. God's Son has set us free. Alleluia. Amen*

*“To me, these acts of love in the face of unspeakable suffering are truly miraculous”*

# Prayer of Farewell

MONDAY, APRIL 15—John 17:13 “Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.”

It can be hard to say “goodbye,” especially if you know it is the last time you will see someone. Because Jesus was human as well as divine, he knew the Last Supper marked the final hours with his 12 disciples, in the flesh. So his final prayer with the Twelve which begins in John 17 is also his longest, as he implores his Father to love them and all who follow as he has loved his Son. In turn he asks that they, and we, should know the gift of eternal life because of him. As this holiest, saddest and yet most joyful week of the year unfolds, may we too spend time with Jesus in prayer as the Promise is Fulfilled once more.

*Jesus my Savior, I promise to spend extra time with you this week. Amen.*

—DONNA MARY MASON

## Do I Hear Someone Calling My Name?

TUESDAY, APRIL 16—Isaiah 43:16 “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.”

Greeting a person with their name is well known to be powerful. From Dale Carnegie to politicians to junk e-mail senders—they all use our name to get our attention and get ahead. Who doesn't like to hang out at a place where everybody knows your name? Naming can be powerful in a negative way too. In folklore there is the concept that “naming calls,” and we know of the wish to avoid “he who should not be named.”

The verse from Isaiah, though, is in a different league altogether. How reassuring and wonderful to hear God, the most powerful being, the Master of the universe, calling our name and saying, “do not fear!”

*Thank you Jesus my Savior, for knowing me well enough to call me by name. Amen.*

—SANDRA LAUBENTHAL

# No Greater Love

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17—John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. So that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have eternal life.”

My husband and I are parents of two sons. From the moment they were born, our love for them was beyond measure. We cannot imagine letting any harm come to them. God’s love is perfect. His love cannot be matched nor exceeded: yet, he was willing to let his son suffer and die because of his love for us, and his wish for us to be with him for eternity, fulfilling his promise. I’ve done nothing to deserve that immense love, yet he gives it to me, and to us all, unconditionally.

*Thank you my Savior, for your unconditional love. Amen.*

—JANET MILLER

# Miraculous Love

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 18—1Peter 2:24b “By his wounds you have been healed.”

To me this passage doesn’t mean that Christ’s torture and murder—his wounds—have by themselves magically erased my sins. Rather, I believe it points to his divine love—his willingness to humbly obey the father and pour out his unconditional love. Just as on this Maundy Thursday we remember Our Lord’s humble and loving act of washing his apostles’ feet, even as he anticipated his horrid and unjust fate.

To me, these acts of love in the face of unspeakable suffering are truly miraculous: God loves us! Not because of anything we have done, but just because we ARE.

*Thank you God, for loving me exactly as I am. Amen.*

—TERRY MCGRAW



# Living Well. I Build Up Myself!

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 19—Ephesians 1:7 “Through him we have redemption by his blood, for forgiveness of sins in accordance with God’s grace.”

Today let’s simply bask in the joy of Jesus’ unspeakable love! No music for me all day, silence and reflection as much as possible. Just think. Jesus restored my relationship with my God. I have grown in that relationship every time I choose love. So I am redeemed, one with my God, and this indeed is Good Friday! A way I can be a redeemed person is to be kind to myself in my self talk. Self-talk is the internal narrative, my inner voice about myself. The world seems upside down right now. It’s even more important than ever to be kind to myself. I thank my God as I accept my greatness because of the God within me!

*Today, I will take time to “bask” in your amazing love for me. Thank you. Amen.*

—FR. JOHN MCGRANN

## “Yes” to Jesus

SATURDAY, APRIL 20—1Corinthians 15:57 “Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This year at the Easter Vigil, five young people are planning to enter the Church through the waters of baptism. I am very excited for these young people, and I am very excited for the world, because through them, Jesus is revealing his resurrected life. Their yes to Jesus gives me hope that the victory promised us in Jesus will be fulfilled—in me. Lent reminds me that I have not been generous in my daily yes. Renewed by Paschal hope, I wholeheartedly say yes!

*May we live as people of hope, for God’s promise has been fulfilled. Amen.*

—FR. BONAVENTURE

# *Jesus Our Savior the Promise Fulfilled*

2025 LENTEN THEME • WORDS MARILYN ROBB  
TO THE TUNE “BE THOU OUR WISDOM”

## VERSE 1

Jesus our Savior, the promise fulfilled.  
Wonderful counselor, God’s only Son.  
Be thou our companion and show us the way.  
Jesus our Savior, the Almighty one.


## VERSE 2

Jesus our Savior, the promise fulfilled.  
Ever our Father whose love will not cease.  
Nurture and guide us with thy tender care.  
Jesus our Savior, the great Prince of Peace.

## VERSE 3

Jesus our Savior, the promise fulfilled.  
You who knew wisdom, help us to be wise.  
No longer captives, your death sets us free.  
Jesus our Savior with you we will rise.





*Thank you to Marilyn Robb  
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Lenten gift to The Madeleine.*

*And to all those who  
contributed daily reflections,  
our utmost appreciation  
for your heartfelt  
inspirations.*

