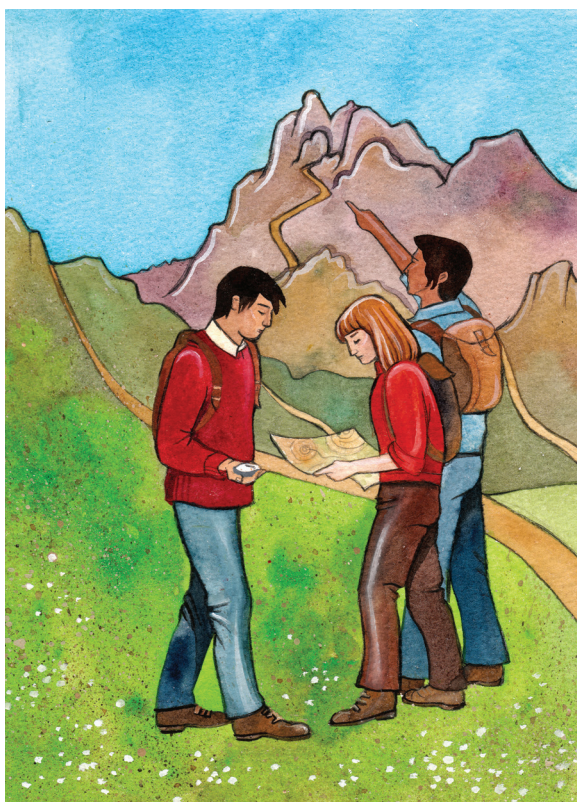


FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



Our Refuge, Our Fortress

God our Refuge,
you liberate us.
As you delivered the Israelites,
you deliver us.
God our Fortress,
be with us in times of trouble:
bring us peace to know the Word
is near us,
strengthen us to profess that Jesus
is Lord;
and grant us courage to know in our
hearts the resurrection of the Lord.
We call upon you,
God our Liberator:
enrich us!
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Be with Me, Lord



Today's readings: Deuteronomy 26:4–10; Psalm 91:1–2, 10–11, 12–13, 14–15; Romans 10:8–13; Luke 4:1–13. Today, we hear Moses and the Israelites pray as they offer the firstfruits of their harvest. They recount their oppression at the hands of the Egyptians and express that, in their struggle, they turned to the Lord. God brought them out of Egypt to a “land flowing with milk and honey” and, in gratitude and awe, the Israelites bow down before the Lord.

On this First Sunday of Lent, there is much we can learn from the Israelites and apply to our Lenten journey. Let us turn to the Lord when we struggle, knowing that he hears our cry and sees our affliction, toil, and oppression. What are some ways you can turn to God, our refuge and fortress, when you are troubled? Consider writing a prayer

for when you find yourself struggling this Lenten season. For inspiration for the prayer, look to today's psalm: “Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble. / My refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust.”

After their deliverance, the Israelites set the firstfruits of their harvest down before the Lord and “bow down in his presence.” In this season of dying to ourselves to grow closer to God, let us detach ourselves from the gifts we have been given and return them to God in praise. What are some ways you can recognize God's presence daily? Consider ending your days with a prayer in gratitude, for we know that God raised Jesus from the dead, and we “will be saved.”



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 10

Lord, When Did I Serve You?

Almsgiving during Lent is often solely thought of as donating money to those who are impoverished. This is a partial understanding of almsgiving; during Lent, we are also called to give of our time, performing acts of charity and serving others. Today, set aside time to pray with the Gospel. Contemplate how you might feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the ill, or visit the imprisoned. Commit to an act of service, and schedule a time to serve this week. *Today's readings: Leviticus 19:1–2, 11–18; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15; Matthew 25:31–46.*

Tuesday, March 11

Do Not Babble

Jesus warns the disciples not to babble when they pray. Today, spend time in silence, just you and God. Begin by praying the Our Father. It may be easy to breeze past this prayer we hear often, so spend time sitting with the words. What stands out to you? Share this in conversation with God. End your prayer with a phrase of gratitude. *Today's readings: Isaiah 55:10–11; Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19; Matthew 6:7–15.*

Wednesday, March 12

A Clean Heart

Though we are part of a different generation than the crowd gathered around Jesus in today's Gospel, much evil is still in our generation. Consider how you might repent and condemn the evil you encounter. If you are able, make plans to go to confession sometime this week. Pray with today's psalm, focusing on the request to God: "Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; / in the greatness of your compassion, wipe out my offense. / Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. / A clean heart create for me, O God, / and a steadfast spirit renew within me." *Today's readings: Jonah 3:1–10; Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 18–19; Luke 11:29–32.*

Thursday, March 13

Come to Help

In today's first reading, we hear Esther cry out to the Lord for help. The psalmist praised the Lord, for he answers our prayers. Today, instead of lifting up your petitions to God, shift your attention to the needs of others. Who is crying out in anguish in your community? How can you work with the Lord to answer their call for help? *Today's readings: Esther C:12, 14–16, 23–25; Psalm 138:1–2ab, 2cde–3, 7c–8; Matthew 7:7–12.*

Friday, March 14

Be Reconciled

Jesus reminds his disciples that reconciliation is crucial to living out our faith. In today's first reading, the prophet Ezekiel calls us to reflect: "Is it my [the Lord's] way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair?" Today, reflect on a relationship you have with someone you may have hurt. Write an apology down. Bring your reflection to confession, the person to whom you are apologizing, or both. *Today's readings: Ezekiel 18:21–28; Psalm 130:1–2, 3–4, 5–7a, 7bc–8; Matthew 5:20–26.*

Saturday, March 15

Love Your Enemy

It is easy to love those who love us. Today, we hear Jesus challenge his disciples to turn to those who persecute them and love them. As Christians, we are called to do the same—even when it is difficult to do so, we are called to love others. If you are able, go to daily Mass today. Spend time praying for someone who has hurt you. Ask God for the strength to let go of your hurt and for the grace to love even those who have hurt us. *Today's readings: Deuteronomy 26:16–19; Psalm 119:1–2, 4–5, 7–8; Matthew 5:43–48.*