



OFFICE OF
Youth Ministry
DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

JOURNEY WITH HIS WORD

A LENTEN WEEKLY REFLECTION
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

WELCOME

As we begin Lent, we enter a new liturgical season. It is a time of waiting and preparation for the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. The three pillars of praying, fasting and almsgiving help us to grow closer to Him (prayer), detach from worldly things (fasting) and give more of self to those in need (almsgiving). Ultimately, it is about knowing how to be like Jesus wherever we go.

This year, our Lenten journey will focus on meditating with the Word of God – also known as “Lectio Divina”. Each week, you are invited to pause and reflect on the Sunday Gospel by following the procedure below. Then you may read the reflection and answer the reflection questions.



LISTEN

Find a space that is comfortable and with no distractions. Read the passage and reflect on what you hear.

Q: What word or phrase stuck out to you?

PONDER

Read the passage a second time. If you wish, try to imagine yourself as someone in the passage.

Q: What is God saying to you?



RESPOND

After reading the passage a third time, pause for a few minutes and sit in the silence of God's presence.

Q: How will you respond to Jesus?

REFLECT

To conclude, read through the reflection and write down your own reflections in the space provided.



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

TEMPTATION IN THE DESERT MATTHEW 4:1-11



The Temptation of Christ by Ary Scheffer, accessed from freechristimages.com/bible-stories/temptation-of-jesus.html

Reflection:

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is led to the wilderness and after fasting for 40 days, He is tempted by the devil. These temptations that He faced are things that we can also face in our daily lives such as seeking instant gratification, seeking control over God, and achieving things at the expense of our holiness. Giving in to these temptations distance us from God because we choose ourselves instead of God. Jesus, however, gives us hope as He affirms in us that we are made for more than what the world offers.

Lent is a time of preparation and transformation, to turn away from oneself and towards full trust and dependance on God. Over the course of these next 40 days, may our fasting, prayer and giving of self to others lead us closer to the One who is waiting for us.

Questions:

What are some things in my life that pull me away from God? How can I improve my relationship with God?

Where is God calling me to share of His love and serve others?

Lent Action Plan

This week, spend at least 5 minutes during your day in prayer with God. Sit with no distractions and complete focus on God.

You may read the Word, speak with God or simply be in silence.

My reflection this week:

(write down your responses and personal reflections below)

THE TRANSFIGURATION MATTHEW 17:1-9

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Reflection: This Sunday, we reflect on the Transfiguration of Jesus as His face shines brightly and His clothes become dazzling white. The prophets Moses and Isaiah appear and are speaking with Jesus, before finally a great voice comes from the clouds declaring Jesus as the Son of God.

Just like the disciples, this is an encounter full of awe and wonder as it shows us a glimpse of the glory of Jesus that is to come. It fills us with hope knowing that the path with Jesus leads us to share in the glory of God, and that in Jesus we see that there is life beyond death and suffering. Jesus comforts us with the words “do not be afraid” because He knows that we can struggle in our daily lives, while God the Father tells us how to persevere - to listen to and follow Jesus!

Lastly, we cannot stay on the mountain because our transformation should carry on into our daily lives so that the light of Christ may shine through the ups and downs of life.

Questions:

What hinders me from being hopeful? What can I do to be more hopeful?

How can I follow Jesus' way today?



My reflection this week:

(write down your responses and personal reflections below)

Lent Action Plan

Be intentional in sharing Christ's light to those around you. Each day, challenge yourself to do a random act of kindness or help someone in need or volunteer.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

WOMAN AT THE WELL JOHN 4:5-42



Jesus and the Woman of Samaria by Carl Bloch, accessed from freechristimages.com/bible-stories/samaritan-woman-at-well.html

Reflection: In this Sunday's Gospel, we read of the Samaritan woman and her encounter with Jesus at the well. It is an encounter that would not happen naturally at that time because a Jew would not share with a Samaritan, nor would a man strike up a conversation with a woman who was known to have a troubled history. Yet Jesus did.

At first glance, a person in this time would be shocked to see this, but it is a perfect example of Jesus' love for us and how our faith ultimately comes down to our relationship and encounter with the Lord. Even the disciples knew this, which is why they did not react in a negative manner.

Through the Samaritan woman, we can see that Jesus meets us where we are at. Regardless of our mistakes and shortcomings and our past, He heals our wounds as He offers a fullness of life so that we will never thirst again. And because of this, there is nothing else to do but tell others about the One who is our hope.

Questions:

What areas of my life do I need to invite the presence of Jesus into? What are you thirsting for?

How can I open my heart to receive the love of Jesus more?

Lent Action Plan

Spend time with Jesus
in Eucharistic Adoration.
Sit with him, speak with him,
and listen to him.

My reflection this week:

(write down your responses and personal reflections below)

HEALING THE BLIND MAN JOHN 9:1-41

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Reflection: This Sunday, we read about Jesus healing a man who was born blind and the gradual transformation of the man's relationship with Jesus. At first, the man answered people's question that a "man named Jesus" healed him. His response then evolves to that "He is a Prophet" and eventually worships Jesus as the Son of God. This progression mirrors our own deepening of faith as we come to know more about Jesus.

We also see an example of spiritual blindness with the Pharisees, who questioned the miracle because it had been done on the Sabbath. Their fixation on following the letters of the law led them to be judgmental, causing them to miss the Son of God among them. Even though they had eyes to see, they still could not see Jesus in front of them.

Once again, it is Jesus who comes to us and heals us from our brokenness. It is through Jesus that we can see the light shine in our lives. And it is on this journey through Lent that we should challenge ourselves to recognize our blind spots, so that we can get back on the path to heaven.

Question:

What blind spots might I have that prevents me from seeing the light of Christ in my life? Do I have any spiritual blindness?



Christ Healing the Blind Man, El Greco, accessed from freechristimages.com/bible-stories/man-born-blind.html

My reflection this week:

(write down your responses and personal reflections below)

Lent Action Plan

Sometime this week, find the time to go to Confession.

Prepare by doing an Examination of Conscience and praying for the graces necessary to have a good confession.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

RAISING OF LAZARUS JOHN 11:1-45



The Raising of Lazarus by Carl Bloch, accessed from freechristimages.com/bible-stories/lazarus-raised-to-life.html

Reflection: In this Sunday's Gospel, we read of a powerful miracle where Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. This encounter with Jesus reveals the power He has over death and is a foreshadow of what is to come when He says that He is "the resurrection and the life". Through this, Jesus shows us that death is not the end and that through Him there is eternal life.

As we reach towards the end of Lent, Jesus reminds us again that He loves us deeply. In that, He does not want us to remain in our sinful ways but to rise above it. Just as He calls Lazarus out of the tomb, Jesus is calling us to leave behind sin and come to Him. No longer will we be bound by sin but be truly free in the light of Christ.

In our lives, we can be like Mary and Martha who question Jesus' timing or like Lazarus who is in a tomb of fear, doubt and despair. However, Jesus encourages us to trust in His timing, that even if He seems distant, He will be there to roll the stone away.

Questions:

Where has the light of Christ shined brightly in your life?

How has your Lenten journey been? What has been God's message for you this Lenten season?

Lent Action Plan

Ask your family, friends and loved ones if they have any prayer intentions.

Spend the next week praying for their intentions as well as for those who are sick and dying, who have no one to pray for them, those who have passed away and for all the souls in purgatory.

My reflection this week:

(write down your responses and personal reflections below)

PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY

THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST MATTHEW 26:14-27:66



Entry Into Jerusalem by Pedro Orrente, 1620 accessed from freechristimages.com/bible-stories/story-of-palm-sunday.html

Reflection: Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, marks the beginning of Holy Week. This Sunday's Gospel is a lengthy one, but an important one as we walk with Jesus from His entrance into the city of Jerusalem, to the Last Supper and eventually to His crucifixion on the Cross on Calvary. It is a drastic change from His vibrant and joyous reception while on a donkey to then the call for Jesus to be crucified. This can be a lot to take in but be encouraged that death will not have its victory.

Through prayer, fasting and giving of self to others, we have been preparing and continue to prepare our hearts for this important time in the liturgical year. Now, as we approach the Paschal Triduum, you are invited to take the opportunity to fully immerse yourself and participate in this Holy Week. Pray and ask for the graces necessary to open your eyes, your hearts and your minds to the Lord so that you may walk alongside him to the Cross. This week we will be reminded of the great love that Jesus has for us as He gives His life for us and by His resurrection, allows us to share in His victory over death.

May the Lord continue to bless you and guide you on your journey as you grow in holiness, becoming a joyful witness of faith and to be a living saint.