



ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS

FEBRUARY 2024



Presentation of the Lord

Feast: 02 February



ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

FEBRUARY
2024

“Come to Jesus, who shines out to us
from Simeon’s arms.
He will give light to your faith,
radiance to your works,
meaning to your words,
ardour to your prayer
and purity to your intentions.”

-Blessed Gueric of Igny

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1 Kings
2:1-4, 10-12

1 Chronicles
29:10-12

Mark
6:7-13



Thursday

01st February 2024

Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Total dependence on the Lord

David's parting instruction to his son was: 'Follow the ways of the Lord at all times', as it will lead to blessings in life. It is no mystery that our God, exalted over all, has a beautiful plan and a purpose for our lives and his ways are nothing but perfect. When it comes to following God's ways, it is not always simple or straightforward. We hear Jesus' instructions to his disciples who are being sent out into unknown places: they were to take nothing but a walking stick. No change of clothes, no food or drink to sustain them for the journey, nothing but the assurance of God's providence and protection to see them through and we hear of no resistance from the disciples. It may be that they were confident of the power of God over their lives or perhaps like many of us, they were willing to place their trust in God even when they could not make sense of things. The outcome of their mission was a great success. Can we go with confidence even when situations seem bleak and uncertain?

PRAYER: Abba Father, may we place our trust in you and not on our understanding. Amen.

Malachi
3:1-4

Psalm
24:7-10

Luke
2:22-40



Friday

02nd February 2024

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Recognizing the Lord

Jesus was presented in the Temple according to the Mosaic Law. The first reading spoke of the Lord's entrance into the Temple - "who could endure the day of his coming"? Jesus came to this world to set us free from our slavery to sin. Often we are slaves or sinners of our thoughts and emotions. We are slaves or sinners of the 'wants' of this world. We are not satisfied with the fulfilment of our needs but crave for wants. Jesus completed his mission and offered himself as the ransom to God while also being the High Priest who offered the sacrifice. This highest sacrifice was offered once and for ever. "Now that the children share in blood and flesh"; those of us who share this highest sacrifice (Eucharist) become one with Christ Jesus. As God's children we are to follow him. Something we need to be open to is that the Lord Jesus would encounter us in different forms like he entered the Temple as an infant. The good news is that when we remain in the Spirit we would recognize him.

PRAYER: Abba Father, grant me the grace to remain in the Spirit.. Amen.

1 Kings
3:4-13

Psalm
119:9-14

Mark
6:30-34



Saturday

03rd February 2024

Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

The Lord walks with us

When God said to Solomon to ask for whatever he wanted, Solomon did not ask for material things, he only asked for wisdom to judge and do the right thing. Often people cannot understand what is right and wrong because values are so confused in today's world, and people are tempted to think that what they feel is right, and God is not a part of their decisions. This view leads to subjective values instead of holding on to the objective truths of God. We too may fall into this way of thinking and therefore need to be careful and depend on the Lord moment to moment because sometimes evil things come to our lives wrapped in innocent and lovely ways. We need to be vigilant and wise. We need to cultivate a strong prayer life to build and sustain our connection with the Lord and discern when we are dealing with crises as God never leaves his children. Let us ask for wisdom from the Lord to walk this journey with him and in him, enveloped in the power of his love.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may I seek your guidance throughout my life's journey. Amen.

Isaiah
43:1-3,5,10-13

Psalms
95:1-3,7-10

Acts
1:12-13; 2:1-2,4-8,11

Matthew
2:1-2, 7-12

Sunday

04th February 2024

Solemnity of Our Lady of Lanka

Let's reach out to the lost through the Good News

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lady of Lanka, where we offer deep reverence and love to our Blessed Mother for sparing our country from destruction during the Second World War. Since then our little island has been entrusted to her maternal care. Her intercession has protected our country and our lives. Jesus was led to perform his first miracle owing to his mother's request. He will continue to listen to our prayers offered through her intercession. Numerous types of intentions like marriages, jobs, child birth, conception, wars, calamities, family disputes, poverty and sickness have been miraculously dealt with through her powerful intercession.

We are blessed and fortunate to have her as our mother. Therefore as Saint Louis de Montfort says: "The more one is consecrated to Mary, the more one is consecrated to Jesus". Thus let us remember: "Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did" (Saint Maximilian Kolbe). Today on this solemn feast day of Our Lady of Lanka, as citizens of Sri Lanka let us consecrate our people and our land in a special way to her care and protection.

The Lord who is our master and guide has protected our people in various different ways throughout our history. His mercy and love does not differentiate between races or languages. Let us pray for the unity of our country, that we can put aside our differences and work together as children of God. Let us unite together in the power of the Holy Spirit, that the people around us would witness the mighty move of God. Today's Gospel proclamation reveals how Jesus had compassion on people as they were like sheep without a shepherd and he started teaching them. He is emphasising that teaching and guiding the flock is important. Without proper teaching one can easily get lost and perish. Do we bother to teach like our Master and care for the flock entrusted to us? It can be our family, parish, community or work place. Do we care to spread the word of God and his teaching among his sheepfold? Let us once again resolve to become ambassadors of Christ, messengers of his mercy and love in this land.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may we follow the example of our role model Jesus, to teach and guide your flock. Amen.





1 Kings
8:1-7,9-13

Psalm
132:6-10

Mark
6:53-56



Monday

05th February 2024

Memorial of Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr

Focus on the presence and power of God

A temple is a permanent place of worship. In the first reading we see how the ark of the covenant was brought to the inner sanctuary of the Jerusalem temple. The temple became a dwelling place of God with the arrival of the ark. The Lord is inviting us to open our hearts to him. We who were moulded by God's hands and given life by his breath are chosen to be his dwelling place. The choice is ours, whether we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us and reveal who we truly are. We are redeemed by his love to host his living presence. What happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the presence of God in and through us? Others will encounter the love of God. The power of God was manifested in Jesus, which made people to experience the compassionate heart of God. Let him enter into our lives. Our families, workplaces and communities need his presence. Be God's vessels through whom he manifests his power and love. We are chosen. Let us find our purpose in him.

PRAYER:

Abba Father, may others experience your compassion and love through me. Amen.

1 Kings
8:22-23,27-30

Psalm
84:3-5,10-11

Mark
7:1-13



Tuesday

06th February 2024

Memorial of Saint Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs

A life with Christ vs. A life in Christ

Today's readings remind us of the experience of walking with Christ in contrast to walking in Christ. In the first reading, there is a cry for God to come down to the temple. The presence of God is seen as dwelling within the Temple. In the Gospel proclamation, we are invited to an 'in Christ' experience, where God is intimately involved in our lives. He desires intimacy; he desires a love relationship with us, an experience where we feel his embrace deep within us. The Psalmist beautifully elaborates this in today's responsorial psalm: "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere" (vs 10). When we have the Lord Jesus in our lives we are complete, we do not need anything or anyone else. However, this is an experience which the Holy Spirit alone can give us. Without him our lives would be empty. Let us desire to experience Christ within us. As we sit in prayer let us say this prayer to the Holy Spirit: "Come Holy Spirit, come and fill my heart".

PRAYER: Abba Father, may I experience your presence in a deeper way. Amen.

1 Kings
10:1-10

Psalm
37:5-6,30-31,39-40

Mark
7:14-23



Wednesday

07th February 2024

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Create in me a pure and contrite heart

In today's Gospel Proclamation the Lord Jesus teaches us that evil thoughts and desires come from within. We live in an era heavily influenced by social norms and values and thus competition, acceptance, worth and value play key roles in our lives and knowingly or unknowingly we fall into this social trap. Today the Lord is asking us to look deep down in our hearts and repent for the number of times we have lived according to the ways of this world. Let us repent for the times we have failed to live according to our true identity of being a son or a daughter of God. Let us repent for the times our thoughts and our actions have been influenced by society. The word of the Lord assures us that as we repent and claim our true identity and seal it in the name of the Lord Jesus, no evil influence of this world can enter our hearts. It is only when our hearts are pure and holy, that we can host the presence of God and reflect the image of God to the world we live in.

PRAYER:

Abba Father, help me to reflect on what is not pure in my life and repent so that I may have a pure heart. Amen.

1 Kings
11:4-13

Psalm
106:3-4,35-37,40

Mark
7:24-30



Thursday

08th February 2024

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

God of the impossible

Having received the sacrament of baptism, we are blessed with the favour and privilege of being children of God. However, we are easily led to take this grace for granted and walk in our ways. The first reading illustrates how King Solomon, despite having a deep experience of the God of Israel, turned his heart to idols. Similarly, we tend to run after wealth, glory and worldly power or are led to believe in false teachings, superstition, idol worship or witchcraft seeking fulfilment and security instead of placing our firm trust in the living God who calls us his own. In today's Gospel proclamation we read about the Syrophenician woman who is a challenge to us. Her faith in the Lord stood firm. Even though she was put-off the first time for being a Gentile, she was persistent as if she knew the heart of the Lord who showers his mercy to all and desires the salvation of the entire human race. Trusting in his love let us stand firm in our faith for he is the God of the impossible.

PRAYER: Abba Father, increase my faith that I may trust you all my days. Amen.

1 Kings
11:29-32; 12:19

Psalm
81:10-15

Mark
7:31-37



Friday

09th February 2024

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Responding to God's call

People approached Jesus for various reasons. Some sought physical healing, others wanted to find fault with him and some approached him to fulfil their worldly needs and wants. Out of these categories, to which do we belong? If we are in relationship with Jesus for worldly needs and wants, our relationship is limited to this world. Our relationship with Jesus must lead towards eternal life. We are created in the likeness and image of God to live with him in eternity. Today's Gospel proclamation talks about the healing of a deaf man. We are called to examine ourselves regarding our response towards the call of Jesus. If we are not able to respond to his call, we also experience deafness as disciples. We have to examine ourselves and see if we are connected with Jesus. The Blessed Mother is a role model in responding to Jesus' call. Her response was unique; it was childlike faith: "I am the handmaid of the Lord". Let us learn to respond to God's call as the Blessed Mother did.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may I be obedient and respond to your voice. Amen.

1 Kings
12:26-32; 13:33-34

Psalm
106:6-7,19-22

Mark
8:1-10



Saturday

10th February 2024

Memorial of Saint Scholastica, Virgin

Provident Father

Jesus became concerned because the people had nothing to eat. Therefore he performed a miracle and satisfied their hunger. Do we remember a time in our lives when we felt we did not have “enough?” We may have been lacking love, food, time, resources, a steady job or enough care from others. How did we respond at that time? Did we bring our “lack” to God for him to fill it? Or did we try to fill it in other ways? Did we try to do it on our own? Let us ask ourselves: ‘what is the “lack” that we are experiencing at this time.’ Will we bring that “lack” to God and trust that we will have more than “enough?” Could we patiently wait upon his provident care for us? What is most important is that all our decisions, no matter whatever we choose, must be filled with love. In the end, love is all that counts. And hopefully, we will receive the gift of love from others and we definitely have received and will continue to experience God’s gift of unending, unfailing, unlimited and unmerited love.

PRAYER: Abba Father, thank you for taking care of our daily needs. Amen.

Leviticus
13:1-2,44-46

Psalms
32:1-2,5,11

1 Corinthians
10:31--11:1

Mark
1:40-45

Sunday

11th February 2024

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Do we stay away from people who are suffering?

Today's readings challenge us to see if we are living in the Old Testament mindset or in the New Testament mindset. The First Reading speaks of the Old Testament law which prescribed that the unclean people should be kept away, while in the Gospel proclamation, the Lord Jesus teaches an entirely new way. He transforms the old laws and invites people to be merciful and loving.

Jesus was overcome with compassion for the leper who was ostracised from society. He could have spoken the words of healing from a safe distance and healed the man. Instead he chose to reach out and touch the 'unclean' man. Instead of infecting the Lord, leprosy had to submit to the touch and command of the Author of life. St Paul, in the Second Reading, invites us to follow the example of Christ, as he was doing.

We too meet the 'lepers' of the 21st century almost every day. They are at our homes, workplaces, parishes, prayer communities and basically everywhere, infected by lovelessness, addictions and various forms of brokenness. Often, we ourselves are infected too. Do we run away from them, not willing to be seen anywhere near them; rather seeking the company of the successful, smart and 'holy' people? Or do we remember that we are in the New Testament era where the Father's love, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has triumphed over the law? We are to go beyond the letter of the law.

Though we know this in our minds, often it is not easy to love the unlovable and to open our hearts to those who have repeatedly failed in life. Knowing our human limitations, our Saviour chose to come and live inside of us by the power of the Holy Spirit, poured out into the world on the day of Pentecost. We have been blessed to receive this priceless treasure. We were initiated into the Christian life of love and power, through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation and it was re-ignited when we received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

What we cannot do by our strength, the Holy Spirit does, empowering us to do everything that the Lord Jesus did and even more (cf John 14:12). Let us allow the Holy Spirit to convict us when we tend to fall back to legalism and forget the supernatural highway of love.

PRAYER:

Abba Father, help us to open our hearts
to receive the instructions and counsel of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

James
1:1-11

Psalm
119:67-68,71-72,75-76

Mark
8:11-13



Monday

12th February 2024

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

Trust God's solution

If anyone told me 16 years ago that my crisis of a child born with a critical heart condition was a situation to rejoice in, I would have walked out of there. I had come to the Lord, in search of signs of wonder in the form of a miraculous healing. I sought the happiness of having my child healed and the freedom a carefree life would bring. It is said that the purpose of the gift of faith is to make us holy and not happy. It is indeed a storm within a storm being tossed between wanting our outcome and wanting God to be involved in the solution. We are encouraged to ask God for wisdom to seek his path out of a storm and the strength to trust his solution. Jesus asks us to believe in his word and in his path, not seek miracles and signs to believe in him. Today, I am still in the prison of my circumstances, but I have been set free in joy and peace. I may not willingly seek to be in my circumstances, but I do not want to go back to my life before my storm, because I experience his love in this trial.

PRAYER:

Abba Father, grant me the wisdom to seek your ways
in times of trouble. Amen.

James
1:12-18

Psalm
94:12-15,18-19

Mark
8:14-21



Tuesday

13th February 2024

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

The holiness and constancy of God

Jesus shows his disappointment to the disciples, that despite the wonderful signs of God's power they were unable to understand. They were caught up in the mundane. That is why Jesus warns them of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod: the world's view. He cautions the disciples not to be like the pharisees after experiencing God in their midst. Aren't we all guilty of this sin to different degrees? Do we still carry that leaven of a world which symbolizes corrupting power and evil which keeps pushing us to that which is not pleasing to God? It disrupts the fibre of our inner-selves so we need to open ourselves to his power. Let us look to the Father who does not change and whose holiness and constancy is touched by nothing. Let us say "Behold, Lord I cast upon you my concerns. You know my ignorance and my weakness, teach me and heal me; because your only Son, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, redeemed me with his blood." (St Augustine)

PRAYER: Abba Father, thank you for setting me free. Amen.

Joel
2:12-18

Psalm
51:3-6,12-14,17

2 Corinthians
5:20--6:2

Matthew
6:1-6,16-18



Wednesday

14th February 2024

Ash Wednesday

In the death of Christ we live

The season of Lent is a period of 40 days of fasting, prayer and almsgiving to remind us of Christ's 40 days in the wilderness and how he defeated temptation. A time to repent and grow in intimacy with God. Jesus' death and resurrection brought us salvation and eternal life. This great love calls us to take up our crosses and drink from the cup of salvation. It is often easy to fast, pray and give alms without renewing our hearts and minds. Jesus is inviting us to see as he sees - our challenges, crises, addictions, sicknesses, relationships and sins. Do I have a heart of repentance for who I have become? What has drawn me away from God? Am I ready to forgive those who have hurt, rejected, ridiculed, used, abused, cheated and lied to me? Can I accept my life from the hands of the Lord knowing that he is my loving Father? Am I ready to suffer and sacrifice for God's glory and the salvation of my family and everyone around me?

PRAYER:

Abba Father, I return to you in repentance,
grant me a willing spirit so that I may live a life of surrender. Amen.

Deuteronomy
30:15-20

Psalm
1:1-4,6

Luke
9:22-25



Thursday

15th February 2024

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Walk with God

Are we living the life that God has called us to? I often pray about what God is revealing to me; if I have chosen life or death in following his commandments. In the first reading, as we reflect on our purpose as sons and daughters of God, he is revealing to us if we have chosen life or death. When we are obedient and choose life to walk with God, we are blessed with direct access to his resources and God's abundance overflows in our lives and onto others. In the responsorial psalm, we have the assurance that God delights in us when we live according to his Word and we will bear much fruit because we are given the hope and promise that we have Abba Father with us. What an amazing assurance that we are never alone but Abba Father is with us each step of our journey. The Gospel proclamation confirms that God is calling us to repent for the Kingdom is close at hand. When we walk with Jesus, we are blessed even when we are persecuted.

PRAYER: Abba Father, let your divine will unfold in our lives. Amen.

Isaiah
58:1-9

Psalm
51:3-6,18-19

Matthew
9:14-15



Friday

16th February 2024

Friday after Ash Wednesday

Conversion of heart through fasting and prayer

Through the forty days of Lent, the Church unites herself to the mystery of Jesus in the desert (CCC 540). The Church has stipulated 2 days (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday) as obligatory days for fasting and abstinence. Fasting tames the flesh. It is the denial of something we desire. Penance includes fasting, prayer and almsgiving. Isaiah teaches us about true fasting and how it becomes pleasing to the Lord. It is not the externals that matter, but a transformation from deep within. Let us fast not only from food, but also from words together with more prayer. Then we will be able to look at others with kindness and compassion, fulfilling the demands of the first reading. In the Gospel proclamation Jesus answers a question about fasting and he is speaking to us today. Like the disciples, we may be experiencing Jesus so close to us and communing with us. But it is easy to lose him as we journey. Then Jesus says fast and pray, so that we may find him again.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may we love and forgive those who have wronged us. Amen.

Isaiah
58:9-14

Psalm
86:1-6

Luke
5:27-32



Saturday

17th February 2024

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

Without repentance there is no inner joy

The Lord has come to call sinners to repentance. Without repentance life is empty and devoid of inner joy. Living according to the world's promptings leaves a vacuum within. Have we not been told "the Lord has thrown down the rulers from their thrones"? (Lk 1:52). Why waste time and energy living in covetousness, lust and pride which won't give what is sought. Instead they lead to the destruction of our souls and bodies. Levi the tax collector responded to Jesus, by surrendering his old nature and well laid out future plans, realizing that it does not give what is promised. The Lord responded; a feast followed with all its joy, celebration and friendship. That is the portrait of the forgiving Lord. The self-righteous on the other hand often do not repent. We may say to ourselves that there is nothing wrong with us. We may hide our dark side; fearing that we may not find favor with God or others. However God says: 'I came to call sinners, that you may discover the joy this world cannot give.'

PRAYER: Abba Father, I surrender my sinfulness to you. Forgive me. Amen.

Genesis
9:8-15

Psalms
25:4-9

1 Peter
3:18-22

Mark
1:12-15

Sunday

18th February 2024

First Sunday of Lent

Power of God's Word

As we read the story of Noah, we see how God works miracles in the lives of those who listen to his words and obey them. From the Old Testament covenant to the new, there have been many people who obeyed the will of God and became channels of his power.

Noah also obeyed the word of God. Therefore he and his family were saved. This is the mission God has entrusted to us. We have to become a doorway to heaven for our families, colleagues and those around us. We need to be a channel for God to come into their lives, to bless and save them just as the family of Noah.

In the New Testament, we see how the Blessed Mother heeded the words of the Lord and was chosen to give birth to the Word himself. When we open ourselves and heed the will of God, he will do great and unimaginable things through us. That is his vision for our lives. We may not see the bigger picture but we need to trust that he does and all we have to do is cling on to him with faith.

Today's Gospel proclamation reminds us of the desert experience of Christ. The first reading and the Gospel proclamation show the importance of obeying God's will: the story of Noah and how Christ saved us from all sins by giving up his life for us. We may feel buried and not see things working around us in crisis situations. So did Noah in the Old Testament; as well as Jesus when he was in the desert for forty days. There may be many trials and tribulations that may come to devour us like the wild beasts in the desert. But we have help from our guardian Angels. We need to hold on and believe in the Word of God.

Pope Francis pointed out, "If salvation is destined for all, even the most distant and lost, then the proclamation of the Word must become the main priority of the Church community, as it was for Jesus. Let us not profess a God with an expansive heart, yet become a Church with a closed heart. Like a sword, the Word penetrates life, enabling us to discern the feelings and thoughts of the heart, that is, making us see where the light of goodness is to be afforded room and where, instead, the thick darkness of vices and sins is to be resisted. When it enters us, the Word transforms our hearts and minds; it changes us and leads us to direct our lives to the Lord".

PRAYER: Abba Father, may we hear your Word and come to know you to be renewed in your love. Amen

Leviticus
19:1-2,11-18

Psalm
19:8-10,15

Matthew
25:31-46



Monday

19th February 2024

First Week of Lent

Holiness and obedience

God desires that we have a relationship with him here and then continue this intimate connection forever. God created us in his own image and because he is holy, we too should be holy. Just like the wings of a bird, to fly to the heart of God, holiness and obedience should become the priority in our lives. On a daily basis when we journey with God our lives change to holiness, we start hearing the voice of God and receive the leading of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately the world has deceived people's minds offering a lifestyle both sinful and unhealthy which ends up in misery and brokenness. The world has dulled the minds of people who no longer have the fear of God and do not take 'judgement' at the end of their lives seriously. The Gospel proclamation shows how we will be categorised according to the lives we lead just like the goats and the sheep. Let us open our eyes to understand the inheritance which awaits those who are obedient to God, then our lives will be fruitful

PRAYER: Abba Father, often I have chosen the way of the world but I realise that I have been wrong. Lead me in the ways of your truth. Amen.

Isaiah
55:10-11

Psalm
34:4-7,16-19

Matthew
6:7-15



Tuesday

20th February 2024

First Week of Lent

A time of grace and mercy

The Prophet Isaiah explains the importance of having a genuine desire to change from within. Lent is a time to look back on our journey; to allow the Lord to wash us and strengthen us. It is not traditions or rituals that bring true conversion but sincere repentance and acceptance of our wrong ways of living. Let us open our hearts during our times of prayer and allow the Holy Spirit to bring to light the dark areas within us. Then we can surrender our lives to the loving hands of Jesus and he will wash us with his blood and make us new. Unless we allow our Lord, who is our lover and spouse to do it, we will live false lives. Let us shift our focus from the desires of this world to genuine love for Jesus. We are his own possession and our efforts and joy should be to please him. Therefore let us not waste this time of grace but ponder on our thoughts, words and deeds on a daily basis and allow the Lord Jesus to change us and take us deeper into his heart.

PRAYER: Abba Father, I surrender my life to you.
Remove my sins and I will be clean. Amen.

Jonah
3:1-10

Psalm
51:3-4,12-13,18-19

Luke
11:29-32



Wednesday

21st February 2024

First Week of Lent

Signs and our relationship with Jesus

At times we ask for signs from the Lord. At times the Lord in his grace gives us signs. In today's readings Jesus gets angry because the people are asking for signs. God has always provided for their needs and protected them. He often gave signs to show his lordship. He wanted them and us to trust him, listen to him and love him. Jesus said to Peter: "Do you love me". He asks this of Peter three times. My view is that he is asking Peter if he loves him for himself or because he gave them bread to eat. By the third time Peter understood and he replied from his heart "Lord you know I love you". Jesus is asking us the same question: do we love him because we want something or do we love him for who he is. This is an intimate question. If we truly love him, we will trust him and know that he hears us. We won't need to ask for a sign. Nevertheless when we see signs of his presence, his healing, his protection and his mercy we are encouraged in our love and faith.

PRAYER: Abba Father, we love you. Increase our faith. Amen.

1 Peter
5:1-4

Psalm
23:1-6

Matthew
16:13-19



Thursday

22nd February 2024

Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter, Apostle

Who do you say that I am?

Today we acknowledge the authority bestowed upon St. Peter by Jesus himself as we read in the Gospel proclamation. At an opportune time, Jesus asks his disciples: "who do people say I am?". Jesus was widely known in Israel as a great man of God, he was even compared with the greatest of the prophets: John the Baptist, Elijah and Jeremiah (v14). Jesus then asks his disciples; "who do you say I am?" Out of the apostles, St. Peter who was quick to respond exclaimed that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God". Jesus goes on to explain that St. Peter is blessed because he has received this revelation from God the Father and not from flesh and blood. Just like to St. Peter, God reveals the Son to the humble of heart. If our desire is to know who Jesus is, we must not try to figure out the truth and the vastness of God through our intellectual capabilities. Instead, we need to humbly trust in the Word of God and the teachings of the Church and allow God to reveal who his Son is.

PRAYER: Abba Father, give us the grace to be humble of heart. Amen.

Ezekiel
18:21-28

Psalm
130:1-8

Matthew
5:20-26



Friday

23rd February 2024

First Week of Lent

To err is human. to forgive divine

The Lord does not delight when we continue our wicked ways. He delights when we turn from evil and change our hearts. Let us reflect on the times we have failed to hear God's voice by breaking the divine law and giving into sin. Instead of continuing with our sins let us reform our lives by breaking the chains of addictions, brokenness, unforgiveness, laziness and complacency for the Lord rejoices when we turn to him as we are. When we connect to God through prayer, thanksgiving and praise we are blessed because we are preserved from sin and led to follow him. The Psalmist gazes on the beauty of God's law and invites us to obey it fully, not doubtfully but confidently, not reluctantly but readily, not slovenly but carefully, not coldly but earnestly and not fitfully but regularly. In today's Gospel proclamation, Jesus emphasizes the need for being at peace with the people we have hurt. Let us make things right with those we have offended or hurt. Let us seek forgiveness.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may I forgive others as you forgive me. Amen.

Deuteronomy
26:16-19

Psalm
119:1-2,4-5,7-8

Matthew
5:43-48



Saturday

24th February 2024

First Week of Lent

Perfection is our calling

We are called to perfection. Jesus is calling us to this seemingly impossible task of being perfect just as our Heavenly Father is perfect. In today's first reading we see the covenant God made with the people of Israel committing himself to them by saying, "you be my people, and I will be your God". But Jesus revealed to us an even deeper relationship with God, revealing him as our Heavenly Father. Perfection is defined as something that is complete and without blemish. Striving for perfection can be seductive; our ego can drive us towards worldly perfection. But the perfection that is being asked of us by Jesus is not to be perfect in the sense of the world but to be a perfect child of our Heavenly Father. Many people strove for this perfection, and their lives show us the path towards this great calling: living immersed in God's grace. Let us commit ourselves to do the will of the Father. Over time these moments will lead into a lifetime of being a child of our Heavenly Father.

PRAYER: Abba Father, empower me to do your will. Amen.

Genesis
22:1-2,9-13,15-18

Psalms
116:10,15-19

Romans
8:31-34

Mark
9:2-10

Sunday

25th February 2024

Second Sunday of Lent

Cling to the Promise Keeper

When Abraham walked up the mountain ready to sacrifice, from the other side of the mountain the Lord sent up provision. It is clear that the God of promises is ever ready to greet our sacrifice with his provision. Out of Abraham's willingness to part with what was most precious to him came the Lord's favour: generational blessings and unimaginable goodness.

There is often a temptation to hold tighter to the promise than to the Promise Keeper. To Abraham, Isaac was more than a son, he was the fulfilment of a promise, and the answer to a prayer made decades before. Isaac was the evidence of the Lord's faithfulness. To give him up, was to give up all this. Abraham's conviction of God's goodness was so strong, that he was certain that his faith could handle this sacrifice. For, he was in relationship with the Promise Keeper, not the Promise.

We know that to be godly is to know sacrifice, for even God sent his son to be sacrificed. Jesus chose it and became the sacrifice which bought our freedom. The power of the resurrection poured out as a result of his willing sacrifice.

Today's Gospel proclamation shows that the ultimate sacrifice was indeed a person. After Jesus revealed his glory to the three disciples, it says "they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them." True relationship with Christ must convince and convict us that he alone is enough, that there is only room for One upon the throne, and that he is Sovereign Lord. True relationship with Jesus must lead to a heart that sacrifices not because it has to, but because it longs to. For as the disciples realised, there is truly none but Jesus.

Every sacrifice we make is a declaration that Jesus is worthy of all. The Psalmist writes, "To you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving, and I will call upon the name of the Lord."

Sacrifice shifts our focus to the Promise Keeper. With everything we offer, we are proclaiming 'Lord all I have is yours, because you alone are my everything'. We can then say: 'O take the whole world, but give me Jesus, though none go with me, I still will follow'.

What will be our sacrifice? What will we place on the altar today? What will we carry up the mountain?

PRAYER: Abba Father, grant me the grace to hear and respond to your voice. Amen.

Daniel
9:4-10

Psalm
79:8-9,11,13

Luke
6:36-38



Monday

26th February 2024

Second Week in Lent

Reciprocity of our actions

When we think of God's mercy we need to ask for mercy and show mercy to others. The Gospel proclamation speaks about being merciful. We have to be merciful as we received the Father's mercy. It is important to have empathy and kindness in our interactions with others. Judgment and harshness should be replaced with mercy and grace. We are imperfect, therefore passing judgment on others is not correct. We need to cultivate humility and refrain from forming hasty opinions. Instead of focusing on their shortcomings, we should seek to understand their perspectives. We need to share love and show compassion and understanding. The reciprocity of our actions – the positivity we give to the world often comes back to us in unexpected ways. The Lord's teaching emphasises on compassion, non-judgment and forgiveness. Our attitudes and actions have a ripple effect. Let us embrace a more compassionate and generous way of living, fostering understanding and empathy.

PRAYER: Abba Father, may I show compassion and love to others, as you show me. Amen.

Isaiah
1:10,16-20

Psalm
50:8-9,16-17,21,23

Matthew
23:1-12



Tuesday

27th February 2024

Second Week in Lent

Let us be channels of God's love

The first reading is an invitation from God to enter the path to holiness, rebuke evil and turn away from vices. It is easy to tread on the path of temporary pleasure and deceit, which is not everlasting. Sin is attractive until we are destroyed. When we start to experience negativity we tend to think that some evil influence is ruling us, but often we have given room to evil to stem up by being wicked towards the helpless and the oppressed. We indulge in our selfish desires while continuing to exercise religious practices. We love to please God and live according to his holy will in our lives. But the flesh, the world and the devil confuse our minds and we keep moving back and forth. Therefore we need to be more receptive of the word of God and be more vigilant about things which contradict the word of God. Let us follow the Ten Commandments but not be self righteous about following it. Let us be motivated by love.

PRAYER: Abba Father, make me a channel of your love. Amen.

Jeremiah
18:18-20

Psalms
31:5-6,14-16

Matthew
20:17-28



Wednesday

28th February 2024

Second Week in Lent

Ambition

The mother of James and John had ambitious plans for them. The Lord says, that such places could only be obtained through a different criteria to that of the world. The other ten were angry, as they too had the same ambitious dreams. The Lord says that even though he is God, he came to serve and not to be served. We too are to have the same attitude. The Lord is the model of a true leader: the model of humble feet-washing service. The secular models are not suited to the Kingdom, to the usual hunger for power and domination. Success in his Kingdom does not consist of power and prestige. Did not Satan tempt the Lord in the desert using prestige and power? Ambition is often to do with self glory and recognition. Divine ambition on the other hand has to do with sacrificial service, even to the extent of being hurt or unappreciated by those we serve. Can our children be made to become ambitious to die to self in bringing life to a paralyzed world?

PRAYER: Abba Father, come and be enthroned in my life. Amen.

Jeremiah
18:18-20

Psalm
31:5-6,14-16

Matthew
20:17-28



Thursday

29th February 2024

Second Week in Lent

Gentle Ruler

If we are convinced of God's love, we are to announce his salvation day after day and tell of his glory among the peoples. We are to rejoice in all circumstances. We will have challenges and setbacks but should not stop being joyful in all circumstances. As we exalt him, he will begin to rule in our lives and his presence will become constant. When his grace appears in our lives, it saves us and trains us to reject godless and worldly desires. We are given the grace to live temperately, justly and devoutly in this age and to pursue saintliness. We begin to await the blessed hope of a life in Christ as we shift from darkness to light. We are assured of the fact that Jesus gave his life to save us. As he cleanses us, we are eager to do what is good. Formerly, we were eager to do what is bad and unbecoming. "Blessed are they who have kept the word with a generous heart and yield a harvest through perseverance" (Lk 8:15). Let us put into practice what we read in the Word of God.

PRAYER: Abba Father, come and be enthroned in my life. Amen.

PRAYER TOOLS - 10 Rememberings

1. REMEMBER THAT JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD FOR ME

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." -John 3:16

2. REMEMBER THAT JESUS REVEALED GOD AS FATHER TO ME

"Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me." -John 5:57

3. REMEMBER THAT JESUS REVEALED THE FATHER'S LOVE TO ME

"Jesus gave them this answer: Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can only do what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." -John 5:19

4. REMEMBER THAT JESUS REVEALS ANOTHER WAY TO LIVE "NOT MY WILL BUT GOD'S."

"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me." -John 6:38

5. REMEMBER THAT JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS IN OBEDIENCE TO THE FATHER TO GIVE ME A 'SURE HOPE'

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him." -John 3:14-15

6. REMEMBER THAT JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND PROVED THAT HIS WAY IS PERFECT AND RIGHT

"It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." -Luke 24:34

7. REMEMBER THAT JESUS ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." -Colossians 3:1

8. REMEMBER THAT JESUS AND THE FATHER ARE TALKING ABOUT ME IN HEAVEN

"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died, more than that, who was raised to life is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." -Romans 8:34

9. REMEMBER THAT HE IS COMING BACK TO LIVE IN ME BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever." -John 14:16

10. REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

"nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is, because the kingdom of God is within you." -Luke 17:21

On Our Knees - In His Hands is a book of reflections and an aid to prayer, based on the daily readings of the Holy Mass. Its purpose is to help Catholics and other Christians engaged in the normal hustle and bustle of life to discover God's presence and direction in the practical situations they are placed in.

This is made possible by a group of writers who are lay people living at the heart of busy day-to-day life.