

assurance of God's forgiveness and mercy, which extends through us into the world.

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect

or pray in silence.

SHARE: Talk about the beauty and graces of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and plan for the date and time when your family will receive the sacrament during this Lenten season. Ask each family member to name one concrete way he or she can bring forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation to your family, neighborhood, or community of faith.

PRAY: Repeat each phrase after the leader: "Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD, / let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation, / For He is our God, / and we are the people he shepherds, / Come, let us bow down in worship, / let us kneel before the LORD who made us" (Ps 95:1, 7a, 6).

Third Sunday of Lent
March 7, 2010

Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15; 1 Cor 10:1-6,

10:12; Lk 13:1-9

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Lk 13:8-9—
"He said to him in reply, "Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future."





KEY IDEA: Being Christian is about second chances, God's mercy is greater than human sinfulness. Discouragement and despair are not the last word on the human condition—repentance and conversion are, for they lead us on the healing path of reconciliation with God and neighbor. Lent is the liturgical season that invites us deeper into this reality of faith.

Today's Gospel reminds us that Lent is a time not only for deeper awareness of our weaknesses, failures, and sinfulness. Lenten joy is rooted in the deep

FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

Here is a guide to assist your family in talking about the Sunday readings. Keep these cards handy wherever they are most likely to be seen and used before and after church. Examine the readings (or the homily) for images or vocabulary that trigger reactions. What's important is that you have the chat together. Follow your conversations wherever they might lead.

KEY TO THE CONVERSATIONS

-  Key Idea: Reflection on a central idea in the readings
-  Take 30 (Seconds): A pause to reflect or pray in silence
-  Share: A time for each family member to share
-  Pray: A suggested moment for prayer

Second Sunday of Lent
February 28, 2010

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18, Phl 3:17-4:1 or

3:20-4:1; Lk 9:28b-36

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Lk 9:35—
"Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son, listen to him."

KEY IDEA: The Gospel account of the Transfiguration conveys both the awe and the fear the disciples must have experienced before the vision of their transfigured Lord. But it is the voice from the clouds that teaches them the meaning of their experience. They are in the presence of the Son of God, who shows them the way of life. The disciples are given a foretaste of the victory of Jesus' death on the Cross in the glory of his Resurrection, just as we mark this Lenten season in the knowledge of Jesus' glorious Resurrection. As dis-

ciples of the transfigured Lord, our lives too are to be transformed. This is the Lenten journey of conversion, our daily path of turning from self-love to love of God and others.

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect

or pray in silence.

SHARE: How is each family member striving to hear God's word more attentively this Lenten season? What does daily conversion mean to you—individually and as a family? Who in the community are you called to support as they progress in their journeys of conversion—catechumens, returning Catholics, new members of the parish?

PRAY: Repeat each phrase after the leader: "The LORD is my light and my salvation, / should I be afraid / Wait for the LORD with courage / Wait for the LORD" (Ps 27:1a, 1c, 14a, 14d).

First Sunday of Lent
February 21, 2010

Dt 26:4-10; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Lk 4:8—
"Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: / "You shall worship the Lord, your God, / and him alone shall you serve."

KEY IDEA: Though the Lenten season the Word of God will gradually draw us deeper into the central moments of Jesus' life. Lent is a renewed opportunity to recognize how Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection provide a pattern for our daily lives. Nowhere is this more concrete than in today's Gospel reading, which tells us about the temptation of Jesus. Like us, he too was tempted. Jesus responds to the temptations of pride, power, and self-dependency. In so doing, he teaches us that a life centered on God withstands and over-

comes the temptations of the world. Lent is the perfect opportunity to restore our life's center in God.

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect or pray in silence.

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SHARE: How does this Gospel reading help spiritually focus our attention on the Lenten season? Let each member of the family name one Lenten practice they will strive to follow. What does each person in the group learn from Jesus' response to temptation? Share how your Lenten observance will help you gradually draw us deeper into the central moments of Jesus' life. Lent is a renewed opportunity to recognize how Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection provide a pattern for our daily lives. Nowhere is this more concrete than in today's Gospel reading, which tells us about the temptation of Jesus. Like us, he too was tempted. Jesus responds to the temptations of pride, power, and self-dependency. In so doing, he teaches us that a life centered on God withstands and over-

PRAY: Repeat each phrase after the leader: "You are my helper, / lead me in the path of daily conversion. Lord, I seek, / Hide not your face from me, / You are my helper, / lead me in the path of daily conversion."

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Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 14, 2010

Jos 5:9a, 10-12; 2 Cor 5:17-21;
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Lk 15:32—
"But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."

KEY IDEA: The parable of the Prodigal Son reflects the deepest desire of the human heart for forgiveness, mercy, and reconciliation. We are created for union with God and with one another in the family of God. Rebellion, alienation, and division distort the original unity and community that God desires for us. As we ponder the alienation of the Prodigal Son and the enduring mercy of his father, we see our relationship to God reflected.

Lent is a time to return once again to God: a time of healing, reconciliation, and joy.

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect or pray in silence.

SHARE: Let each member of the family share what the parable of the Prodigal Son means for his or her Lenten journey. Ask each member to name one agent of peace, reconciliation, and healing in your family and community of faith. How are you called to be a messenger of reconciliation?

PRAY: (Repeat each phrase after the leader.) "I will bless the LORD at all times; / his praise shall be ever in my mouth. / I sought the LORD, and he answered me / and delivered me from all my fears" (Ps 34:2, 5).

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Fifth Sunday of Lent
March 21, 2010

Is 43:16-21; Phil 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Jn 8:11—
"Then Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.'"

KEY IDEA: It's never too late to begin a Lenten journey, perhaps even as the liturgical season draws to a close. In today's Gospel, Jesus' compassion for the woman who was condemned and near death from stoning is a striking reminder of God's constant mercy. The short-lived mercy of human beings is overcome by the eternal mercy of God. Jesus, the one without sin, was the only one who could have justly condemned her. Yet he forgives her sin, restores her dignity, and invites her to freedom of life in God. This

invitation is also given to each of us during Lent. Will we accept it?

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect or pray in silence.

SHARE: Whom do I tend to judge hastily? How am I called to concretely imitate Jesus' example of compassionate mercy? Am I open to receiving the forgiveness of God and of others? Ask each family member to share why the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is a powerful means offered by the Church by which we experience God's mercy.

PRAY: (Repeat each phrase after the leader.) "The LORD has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. / Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing. / The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad indeed" (Ps 126:3, 5).



Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
March 28, 2010

Lk 19:28-40; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11;
Lk 22:14-23:56 or 23:1-49

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Lk 23:34—
"Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.'"

KEY IDEA: The Lenten season draws to a close as we enter Holy Week—the highpoint of the Church's liturgical calendar. The dramatic events that we recall on Palm Sunday will draw us into the very mystery of Jesus' suffering, death, and Resurrection. At the moment of greatest abandonment and isolation, Jesus prays that God will forgive those who crucify him. He forgives every sinner as he takes on the sin of the world. The events of this week are not a distant historical reality that we ponder from afar in the abstract.

of Easter resounds in our minds and hearts, the truth of Jesus' Resurrection finds echo in our lives. Christ is risen, he is risen indeed! Alleluia!

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect or pray in silence.

SHARE: How has our reflection on God's Word during Lent prepared us to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection? Name one personal hope and one family hope that is renewed in light of the event of Easter.

Have each family member share how the meaning of the Lord's Resurrection or she will continue to reflect on throughout the Easter season.

PRAY: (Repeat each phrase after the leader.) Alleluia! Alleluia! / The Lord is risen as he said. / He lives now to lead us to the fullness of hope and joy in God. / Alleluia! Alleluia!

For us as Christians, the events of Holy Week are offered as a pattern for daily life. Jesus' Passion, dying, and rising are a pattern for our daily lives as disciples of the Lord.

TAKE 30 (SECONDS): Reflect or pray in silence.

SHARE: How does God's Word today invite us to enter more fully into the mystery of the Cross, death, and Resurrection of the Lord? To whom are we called to extend a forgiving word and thought? Are our hearts and minds open to receive the forgiveness that Jesus offers to all from the Cross? Share how the readings of Palm Sunday are a pattern for your daily life.

PRAY: (Repeat each phrase after the leader.) We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you / because by your holy Cross / you have redeemed the world.

Easter Sunday
April 4, 2010

Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8; Jn 20:1-9 or Lk 24:1-12

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT: Jn 20:8—
"Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed."

KEY IDEA: The Resurrection of our Lord is the central mystery of Christian faith. It is also the central hope of daily human existence.

With the Resurrection we can be certain that suffering and death is not the final word on the human condition. This is the deepest source of Christian hope.

And it is the wellspring of true Christian joy. On Easter Sunday God's Word bursts forth in a joyful hymn of praise as the Church resounds with Alleluias.

Our Lenten observance now finds its fullest meaning. As the message