

SUNDAY *Plus*

1st Sunday of Lent **Divine Office Week I** Year A


Good
News
from
God

Jesus, we are told, came bringing "the Good News from God". He had extraordinarily good news for the people of his hometown of Nazareth and for all the people of Israel. But right from the start of his preaching and teaching he encountered opposition. His fellow citizens in Nazareth were perplexed by the sudden and unexpected emergence in Jesus of a wisdom and a power they never suspected. They thought they knew him well. He was one of themselves and he grew up with them. When he began to teach them in their synagogue they were amazed at his message and at his skills in delivering it and the miracles that were happening at his word... And they would not accept him.


The scribes and Pharisees, the religious elite of Israel, were not

prepared to listen to him either because they knew that he had not attended a rabbinic school nor sat at the feet of a great teacher of the Law like Nicodemus or Gamaliel, and therefore he had nothing to teach them. It was their right to teach him and his duty to learn from them and obey them...

But Jesus makes it very clear that God's ways are not our ways. God doesn't see the world as we see it. God has an eye for the unique value of each individual, even the one whom the scribes and Pharisees may reject as a renegade sinner...

There is joy in heaven, Jesus assures us, when we acknowledge our sins and ask for forgiveness... God never humiliates us.

James McManus C.Ss.R., Embraced by Mercy

Speak to my heart, Lord. Let me hear your voice. Guide me on my path through life. Bring me closer to you.  Amen.

A moment of mindfulness

This spiritual exercise will deepen your awareness of being in the presence of the God of mercy and show you how God has embraced you with his love and mercy.

- Centre yourself; sitting upright; breathing rhythmically; clearing your mind of all pre-occupations.
- Bring yourself to bodily stillness.
- Now calmly acknowledge that you are the prodigal in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32).
- Experience the Father rushing to embrace you and welcome you.
- Be still for some time in the presence of the God of mercy and compassion and receive his love.
- Now focus again on your breathing as you relax in God's presence, and bring yourself gently back to the world.

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Let us ask our heavenly Father to assist us in living in service to one another, each according to his or her state of life, shepherds after his own heart, capable of helping one another to walk in love and truth.

Pope Leo



Saints

St Jude: emotions in times of despair

By Sr Thérèse Garman OLP

St Jude is a symbol of hope: the patron saint of desperate causes. Hope is remembering what God has already done in history and has promised to do in the future. Desperate people need to experience the light of Christ; to be helped from despair into hope, which is the willingness to persevere when our faith is shaky or absent; an openness to new possibilities. Can we keep hope alive in today's world where this capacity is challenged, by counteracting the belief that death or shattered dreams are the end? Christ's story did not end on the cross. That was a new beginning, when God's Spirit became more far-reaching. A terrible death began a new consciousness in humanity. Hope is the realisation that all of creation will be made new. We carry this hope to our broken world. May the power of Christ present in St Jude as he healed people and spread God's love, also be in us as we go out and spread the Gospel of hope.

Sr Thérèse Garman is a Sister of Our Lady of Providence and a treasured former member of the Redemptorist Publications editorial team

READINGS

Today:
Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Monday:
Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18
Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday:
Isaiah 55:10-11
Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday:
Jonah 3:1-10
Luke 11:29-32

Thursday:
Esther 4:17m,
17o-17q, 17x-17z
Matthew 7:7-12

Friday:
Ezekiel 18:21-28
Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday:
Deuteronomy 26:16-19
Matthew 5:43-48

Next Sunday:
Genesis 12:1-4
2 Timothy 1:8-10
Matthew 17:1-9