

Dear Padre,

When I'm trying to pray, I can't stop thinking about my to-do list. How do I keep my mind from racing when I pray?

Most spiritual directors encourage a person to enter gently into solitude and prayer. Real conversation with any friend begins with warm acknowledgment of that friend's presence, so as you sit or kneel, acknowledge that you are in a sacred place and that God is present.

Several techniques can help us find interior silence and solitude. Many people find it helps to sit in a comfortable position and pay close attention to their breathing. Taking slow, deep breaths relaxes our minds and hearts.

When repeated, a sacred word like *Jesus* or *Abba* can focus our attention and help us let go of the distractions that can so easily crowd our consciousness.

Another technique is to take a few moments to find quiet, then read a passage from Scripture. Many people choose the Gospel passage of the day; others read a Gospel through from beginning to end by reading a short passage each day. Other excellent techniques to focus your praying include the Church traditions of *lectio divina* as well as the imaginative prayer method advocated by St. Ignatius.

True conversation goes both ways. One way God speaks to us is through the word. Reading Scripture as part of our conversation with God is a good way to be sure we don't do all the talking.

Fr. Michael Brehl, CSSR / Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

Prayer often coexists with distraction. Indeed, the human mind struggles to dwell for long on a single thought. We all experience this constant whirlwind of images and illusions in perpetual motion, which accompanies us even during sleep. And we all know that it is not good to follow this inclination toward disorder.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, MAY 19, 2021

Calendar

Monday
MARCH 28
Lenten Weekday
Is 65:17-21
Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday
MARCH 29
Lenten Weekday
Ez 47:1-9, 12
Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday
MARCH 30
Lenten Weekday
Is 49:8-15
Jn 5:17-30

Thursday
MARCH 31
Lenten Weekday
Ex 32:7-14
Jn 5:31-47

Friday
APRIL 1
Lenten Weekday
Wis 2:1a, 12-22
Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday
APRIL 2
Lenten Weekday
Jer 11:18-20
Jn 7:40-53

Sunday
APRIL 3
Fifth Sunday of Lent
Is 43:16-21
Phil 3:8-14
Jn 8:1-11

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Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 27, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Lent (C)

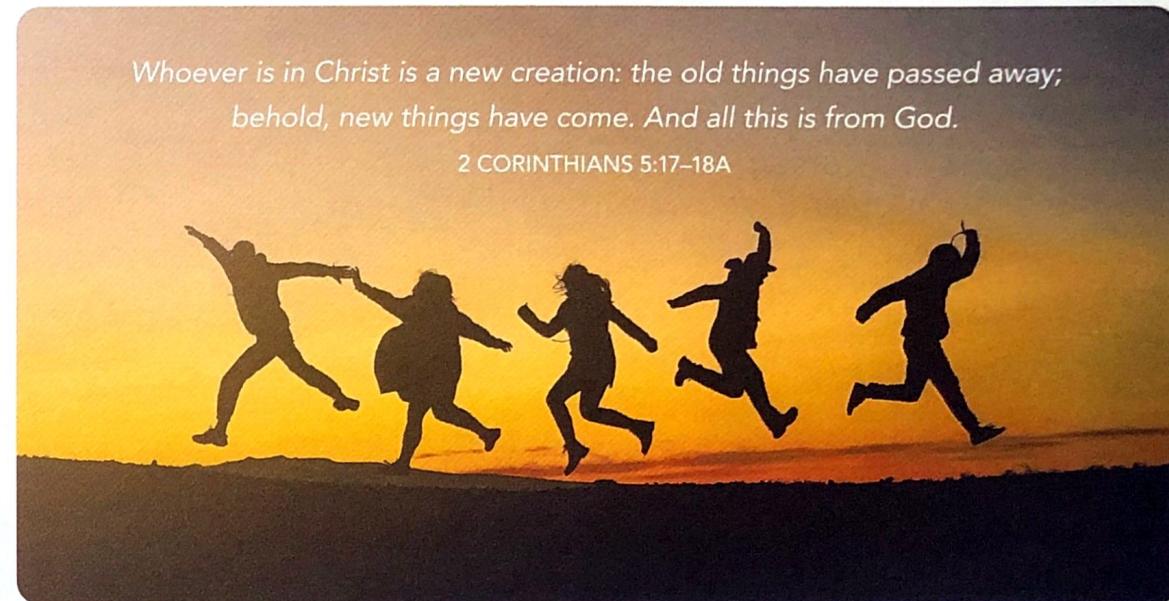
Jos 5:9a, 10-12

2 Cor 5:17-21

Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. And all this is from God.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-18A



Rejoice!

Today is **Laetare Sunday, the Lenten Sunday to rejoice**. We are encouraged to rejoice, not because Lent is half over, but because something extraordinary has occurred. All three readings for today applaud some wondrous and joyous occasion.

The reading from Joshua notes the end of the Israelites' grueling Egyptian and wilderness experience. They settled in Canaan and now celebrated the anniversary of their deliverance by offering to God in gratitude the fruits of their own harvest. The people who once were landless have now been made anew. This is surely a reason to rejoice.

Paul's words to the Corinthians were reason for great rejoicing. He assured them that, because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, their sinfulness was not held against them. Instead, they were now reconciled with God. They were a new creation. This too is reason to rejoice.

Jesus' story about the merciful father touches every

life. The young son turned away from his home and his family, yet it was the father's actions that brought about the reconciliation. The story did not explicitly say that he simply forgave his son. More than that, it says that he was filled with deep compassion for him—a compassion that restored the bond between them. This compassion brought the son who was dead back to life. There is no greater reason for rejoicing.

God has brought us into a new land, has made each of us a new creation, has brought us back to the embrace of our Father. And so, we rejoice.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ *Think of a time when a severed relationship was repaired. Be grateful.*
- ★ *What might you do to repair a situation of alienation in your life?*



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 Email: saintanthonylakin@gmail.com
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Karen Burden, Rel.Edu. Committee 355-6388
 Lisa Gannett, DRE 355-6611
 RCIA 355-6405
 Gwen Waechter, Parish Council Chair 272-1030
 Tressa Powers, Finance Council Chair 355-6206
 Altar Society President, Nanette Rice 355-7676
 Tom Bachman, Grand Knight 640-8259
 Prayer Line Starters, Allison Bushek 355-1696
 & Nanette Rice 355-7676

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (color: Violet)

3/26/2022 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Maggie Gannett, Jonathan Gannett, Nathan Gannett

Reader: Gwen Waechter

3/27/2022—Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Servers: Cade Berning, Jace Berning, Luke Woodrow

Reader: Alvin Bergkamp

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (color: Violet)

4/2/2022 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Lucy Gannett, Jason Velasco, Ryann Bamberger

Reader: Karen Burden

4/3/2022—Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Servers: K of C

Reader: Julie Kaps

Saturday, Mar. 26	4:00 p.m.	For the People
Sunday, Mar. 27	9:00 a.m.	Marlyn Morrison
Monday, Mar. 28	8:00 a.m.	Mark Meier
Tuesday, Mar. 29	8:00 a.m.	Charles & Eileen Hoff
Thursday, Mar. 31	8:00 a.m.	For Rain
Friday, April 1	8:00 a.m.	Joyce Sack
Saturday, April 2	1:00 p.m.	Confirmation Mass
Saturday, April 2	4: 00 p.m.	Special Int. Powers F.
Sunday, April 3	9:00 a.m.	Mike Dykstra

Reconciliation: Confessions will be heard every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. or by appointment.

Baptism: Parents who have children to be baptized must be registered. Godparents must be 16 years of age or older and have received Confirmation and Eucharist. Please call the parish office for an appointment.

Marriage: Please contact parish priest at least four to six months before the wedding.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 27, 2022



Friends, all of us in one way or another sometimes do things that hurt friends, and co-workers, and strangers, and of course, family members. Parents, at times, disappoint their children. Husbands sometimes disappoint wives, and wives sometimes disappoint husbands. Brothers and sisters betray one another in small ways and sometimes in large ways. And of course, children disappoint their parents.

And so the question to us is, what are you going to do when it happens? This fourth Sunday of Lent the Church invites us to reflect the message of forgiveness through the inspiring story of the Prodigal son. Can we be like the dad in the story? Can we forgive and let things go --- not at some point in the future, but this very day, this very hour, this very second?

And can we do it without requiring anything.

That's the challenge. That's what true forgiveness is. That's what a loving heart does.

Fr. Peter

2022– TRIDUUM—EASTER CELEBRATION

Holy Thursday—April 14—6:00 p.m. Lakin; 6:30 p.m.(MT) Syracuse

Good Friday—April 15—3:00 p.m. Lakin; 6:00 p.m. (MT) Syracuse

Easter Vigil Saturday—April 16—8:30 p.m. Lakin

Easter Sunday Mass – April 17 at 9:00 a.m. Lakin; Deerfield at 9:00 a.m. & Syracuse 10:30 a.m. (MT)

COLLECTION for March 20th, 2022: Envelopes: \$720; Loose: \$195; Online Giving: \$198.07; Total \$1,113.07; Average Weekly Expense: \$1,761.17. Income over/under - 648.1

CHURCH PROJECT GOAL \$52000—Last weekend contribution: \$842; Building Fund To Date: \$8,230.26

Thank you so much for your love for our parish church and your faithful stewards.

ALTAR SOCIETY MEETING Altar Society will have a meeting on Sunday—April 10 at 5:00 p.m. at the parish hall.

CONFIRMATION CELEBRATION Please pray for Adrick Gomez Esquibel, Damaris Dominguez, Fatima Dominguez, Kallie Ann Messenger, Keleigh Perez, Nayeli Monroy, Manuel Monroy, Zamira Beltran, Abilene Beltran, Alondra Mendez, and Halle M. Woodrow and their sponsors, parents, and catechist. Those Eleven young candidates will be confirmed on **April 2nd at 1:00 p.m.** May they open their minds and hearts fully to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit on that date!

LENT 2022 CONFESSIONS Please make an extra effort to attend our parish reconciliation this Sunday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m. to reconcile with God, the Church, and with others in order to be ready ourselves to celebrate the passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord. Fr. Peter will also be available every Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30; every Saturday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. and every Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. or by appointment.

CCD LENT CONFESSIONS THIS YEAR March 30th at 6:30 p.m.—5th and 6th grade.

SOUP & SERMON St. Anthony's and Christ, the King parishes will be in charge of Soup and Sermon on Wednesday—April 6. If you can help with soup or sandwiches or helping that day, please call Nanette Rice 620-355-7676 or 620-651-1327.

EASTER FLOWERS If you want to send flowers in memory of a Loved One for Easter, please put your donation and names into the regular collection

STATIONS OF THE CROSS We hold Stations of the Cross led by Knights of Columbus every Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. during Lent. We hope you will join us for this prayerful devotion.

VOCATION VIEW "I am the light of the world, says the Lord." Are you called to bring the Light of Christ to the world through a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life?

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT The stewardship message in the parable of the Prodigal Son is that it is never too late to become a good steward. Blessed is the elder brother who had been a good steward all along, but blessed, too, is the prodigal who had to lose all he had in order to understand the value of what he'd been given.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (by brother Roger Schutz, founder of the Taize Community) You were in me, Christ, you were always there, and I was not seeking you. When I had found you, so often I forgot you. But you continued to love me. From the depths of my being, a fire was rising to take hold of me. I was burning for you to be everything in my life. I was calling you: you, the Christ, are the only way; I have no other. Amen.

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF THE WEEK - (Luke 15:1-3,11-32)

Guiding our interpretation Luke creates a context for this parable that shapes our interpretation of it. He has shown Jesus interacting with all kinds of people, regardless of their social status. Righteous Jews like the Pharisees complain that sinners should repent before being counted among God's people. In the parable the Pharisees will seem like the resentful older son. The father will seem like God, who as seen in the ministry of Jesus, welcomes sinners regardless of their contrition. Luke emphasizes that God's priority is to welcome sinners rather than make sure they're punished for their sins. The parable also invites us to ask if we're reaching out to people whom others have forgotten, deliberately excluded, or even vilified.

Self-indulgence It was unusual for a father to divide his property before his death. The father probably grieved over his younger son's request and at his departure. The son's actions might also have dishonored his father, but the father could have refused. Instead, the father seems to indulge his son. Rehearsing an act of contrition When famine hits, the younger son tends pigs, animals that Jews were supposed to keep away from. The pigs, however, have it better than he does. We hear the son formulate a plan for returning to his father. We don't know if he has really repented or if he's merely hoping that his father will take him back no matter what.

A prodigal reception The father responds with overwhelming love, just as the younger son had hoped. He rushes to his son and restores his place in the family by giving him a ring with the family seal on it and dressing him in fine clothes. Then he throws a big party. He even orders that a calf that was being reserved for a special occasion be prepared.

The other lost son Having regained one son, the father discovers he has lost another. No one has bothered to tell the older son what's happening. Just as the father went out to welcome the younger son, he must now go out to the older one. This son resents his father's merciful treatment of his brother and the way he himself has been taken for granted. The parable ends here. We're left wondering what will happen next — and what we ourselves would say and do. For more insights into this parable, see Amy-Jill Levine's Short Stories by Jesus. (www.oursundayreadings)

UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST READING (Joshua 5: 9a,10-12)

Milestones The first readings during Lent present significant moments in the history of Israel. In this passage God's people, whom God led out of slavery and sustained in the Sinai desert, have at last arrived in Canaan, the fertile homeland God promised to Abraham centuries earlier.

Passover Passover is a celebration of what God did for his people in Egypt. It's also a time to thank God for the promises God has made and kept. In this passage God's people are celebrating Passover for the first time in the land that God promised to give them. **No more manna** While they were in the wilderness, God sustained his people with manna, quail, and water. God was trying to teach the people that he would take care of them. Now that the people have arrived in a land where they can grow food for themselves, they no longer need God to give them manna. (www.oursundayreadings)

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question: Can someone who is not in the state of grace pray and have their prayers heard? Does God listen to the prayers of someone still with mortal sins on their soul? — Doris DeHay

Answer: It depends a bit on what is meant by the word “heard.” It can never be argued in a literal sense that God cannot hear something. For nothing escapes God’s notice, and in no sense could he be said to be incapable of hearing a prayer. However, if heard means that a prayer would be favorably received by God, that is another matter. And that is what the second sentence of your question seems to focus on.

Generally, it would seem that God pays little heed to the prayers of unrepentant mortal sinners, though there are surely some exceptions. For example, in the Scriptures we read: “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, / or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; / but your iniquities have made a separation / between you and your God, / and your sins have hidden his face from you / so that he does not hear” (Is 59:1–2). Or, again, “He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor / will himself cry out and not be heard” (Prv 21:13).

So, it would seem that there is a good basis for concluding that unrepentant mortal sinners are going to have a difficult time getting their prayers answered as they would like. However, experience teaches that even mortal sinners do partake of many of God’s blessings. And this, too, Jesus affirms: “For [the Lord] makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Mt 5:45). How God chooses to bless or withhold blessings from the unjust is therefore not an all-or-nothing proposition but is caught up in the mystery of his providence. Perhaps he knows a person will one day repent; perhaps he knows that an answered prayer now will help lead to repentance later. Perhaps, too, he knows that to withhold a blessing is the better course. Thus God remains sovereign in applying wisdom to each situation. That said, we ought to remain sober about the need to pray in righteousness. For if God cannot trust us with the blessings we already have, why should he trust us with further blessings?

The First Letter of John has some advice about praying with and for those in serious sin: “If any one sees his brother committing what is not a deadly sin, he will ask, and God will give him life for those whose sin is not deadly. There is sin which is deadly; I do not say that one is to pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which is not deadly” (1 Jn 5:16–17). While the instruction of John here is complex, he is saying in effect that, if we are reasonably sure that someone is in serious sin, we ought skip over praying for lesser things like a new job for them, etc. Rather, the essential and only really efficacious prayer for them is to pray for their repentance. For to be dead in sins is to rather powerfully block any other blessings.

While God can bless even serious sinners, we ought not presuppose that he will do so and should make it our priority to pray for life-saving repentance. (Monsignor Charles Pope)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

An investment worth making

It's not uncommon to identify individuals, or groups of people, as unworthy of our time and attention. Sometimes these folks just plain bore us to tears. But more often, we view them as freeloaders, untrustworthy, or even bad to the bone. Jesus was criticized for dining with the wrong people: prostitutes (immoral), tax collectors (unpatriotic), and sinners (generally unsavory types). Jesus tells a story of a feast thrown for a "worthless" son to explain why he himself chooses to "waste" time on the undeserving. The lost need finding, and the dead need life restored. "Hospitality opens the gates of paradise," wrote Orthodox Elder Amphilochius of Patmos. Set another place at your table. (Prepare the Word)

CUARTO DOMINGO DE CUARESMA

Una inversión que vale la pena

No es raro tildar a individuos o grupos de personas como indignos de nuestro tiempo y atención. A veces, estas personas simplemente nos aburren hasta las lágrimas. Pero más a menudo, los vemos como vividores, indignos de confianza, o incluso malos hasta los huesos. Jesús fue criticado por comer con gente incorrecta: prostitutas (inmorales), recaudadores de impuestos (antipatriotas) y pecadores (gente generalmente desagradable). Jesús cuenta la historia de un banquete organizado para un hijo "inútil" para explicar por qué él mismo elige "perder" el tiempo con quienes no lo merecen. Es necesario encontrar a los perdidos y devolver la vida a los muertos. "La hospitalidad abre las puertas del paraíso," escribió el anciano ortodoxo Anfiloquio de Patmos. Prepara otro lugar en tu mesa.