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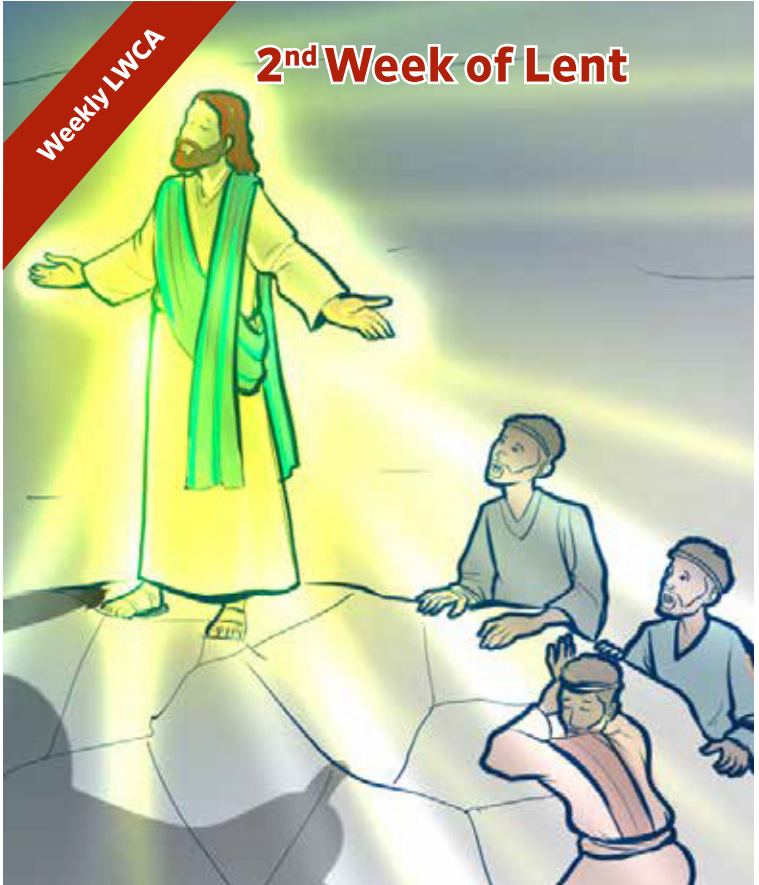
# Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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#### **Liturgical texts:**

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**On our cover:** Transfiguration of the Lord.

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# Editorial

March 2023



Rev. Fr. Walter C. Ihejirika, Nigeria

## Fighting Temptation

We begin this month with the celebration of Ash Wednesday, the liturgical event which ushers us into the Lenten season. A major theme of Lent as highlighted in the readings of the First Sunday is the reality of temptation and two contrasting ways of dealing with it.

Temptation is the effort by the evil one to lead the children of God away from obeying Him. It is a choice between good and evil, satisfying personal needs and sacrificing for the general good. In the Book of Genesis, Adam and Eve knew perfectly well what God asked them to do and not to do; but they disobeyed. (Gen 2:7-9,31-7) Jesus, the Second Adam, knew perfectly well the will of the Father for him, and did not allow the inducements of the tempter to detract him from achieving that goal (Mt 4:1-7).

Temptations come with great promises, but the reality they produce are quite different. Through the obedience of Christ, we regained the grace lost by our first parents (Rm 5:12-19).



# The Pope's Prayer Intention

***For victims of abuse:*** We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.

Other papal intentions and videos can be found on: <http://apostleshipofprayer.org/>

### The Holy Mass: Introduction

**T**he Holy Mass begins with the sign of the cross during the initial rites and ends with the sign of the cross during the concluding rites. However, before the first sign of the cross, the faithful already prepare for Holy Mass from their respective homes, and at the end of the Mass, the celebrant sends the faithful on mission. In this regard, the faithful are invited to live according to the Word of God that they have heard and to be the living sacrifice that they have participated in. That is the reason why the prayer after communion often creates a link between the Eucharistic celebration and real life. As an example, the prayer after communion of the fifth Sunday in the Ordinary Time, Year A says this: *O God, who have willed that we be partakers in the one Bread and the one Chalice, grant us, we pray, so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation of the world.*

The Holy Mass is composed of two parts: The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The two parts are linked. In fact, the Word that the faithful hear in the first part is the same Word that becomes flesh in

the second part. For this reason, the faithful are invited to participate in the entire Mass. It is worth saying that the second part of Holy Mass can never be celebrated without the first. In other words, the Liturgy of the Eucharist cannot stand on its own. It is the continuation of the first part. On the contrary, the first part can be celebrated without the second. This is the case of the celebration of the Word without a priest.

As in every liturgical celebration, during Holy Mass, it is God who speaks to us. He is the one who takes the initiative. We just respond to his call. The Holy Mass should not, therefore, be reduced to a mere external ceremony. But it is, as Pope Francis likes to say, the encounter between God and his people. In fact, the two major liturgical actors are Christ and the Church.

The Eucharist brings us together as one people. All our differences (tribes, races, preferences, etc.) disappear because we are all children of God. Indeed, the purpose of the Eucharist is unity as stated in the Missal: *“Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit”*. In this perspective, the faithful who participate in Holy Mass

*should be aware that they belong to one people: The People of God.*

In a Eucharistic celebration, it is necessary to use the official texts. The Church always provides liturgical books for the people celebrating to use. To invent personal texts and use them in the Eucharistic celebration is to go against the Church's prescriptions. Although we are one people, in the celebration of the Eucharist each of us plays his own role. In fact, there are different ministers: the priest, the deacon, the altar boys, the readers, the choir, the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the assembly, etc.

In traditional African cultures, people made sacrifices for various reasons: recognition of the greatness of the gods, request for a good harvest, request for health, protection against evil spirits and bad weather, etc. When the missionaries arrived, they christianized some of the traditional practices. African Christians understand that the Mass is a sacrifice offered to God to glorify him and for their own sanctification.

***Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. Kombi,***  
*Kinshasa, D.R. Congo*



# Sunday March 5

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent. Year A

*Genesis 12:1-4 / Psalm (32) 33 / 2 Timothy 1:8-10 / Matthew 17:1-9*



“And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light.” (Matthew 17: 2)





## *Certainly, after the Storm Comes the Glory*

**A**s we continue our journey through the season of Lent in preparation for the glorious morning of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (Easter), the church presents for our reflection today an incidence which took place just before the betrayal, arrest, persecution, trial and death of our Lord Jesus. The scene of the Transfiguration was such a glorious one, so beautiful that Peter started thinking of building permanent tents; he thought he was already in heaven.

*To pray is to Be Transfigured.* Prayer is our gateway to heaven. When we pray well (without distraction), we literally transport ourselves to God's presence and if God so opens our eyes, we would be surprised at what we would see during prayer. Never take prayer for granted.

*The Purpose of the Transfiguration.* The Transfiguration event was God's way of preparing His Son Jesus for the arduous task ahead. Moses represents the Law and Elijah represents the Prophets. The appearance of



**Sunday March 5**

Moses and Elijah, therefore, connotes the deep-seated reality that Jesus has fulfilled the Law and Prophets. The Transfiguration also served to strengthen the faith of Peter, James and John. The disciples must have been questioning in their hearts: “If he says he is God, why should he suffer? Can God suffer?” There was just no better way to explain to the disciples than to bring them to witness the Transfiguration.

*Trials are Part of Life.* St. Paul writes: “Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, (2 Timothy 1:8-9). Do not be ashamed of Jesus because things are not moving well for you. Remember the great and powerful things Jesus did for you in past, hold on to your testimony. Hold on to your own transfiguration experience. God remains in charge.

*Listen to Jesus.* Just as it was in the Baptism of Jesus, in the Transfiguration, a voice is heard from heaven saying: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***



**Entrance Antiphon** (*Ps (26) 27:8-9*)

Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

**or:** (*Ps (24) 25:6.2.22*)

Remember your compassion, O Lord, and your merciful love, for they are from of old. Let not our enemies exult over us. Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.

**Collect**

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*Genesis 12:1-4a*)

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

In those days: The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.” So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.

The word of God. **Thanks be to God.**



Sunday March 5

*Responsorial Psalm (Psalm <sup>(32)</sup> 33:4-5.18-19.20 and 22)*

Let your love be up - on us, Lord,  
e - ven as we hope in you.

**R.** May your merciful love upon us, as we hope in you, O Lord.

The world of the Lord is faithful,  
and all his works to be trusted.  
The Lord loves justice and right,  
and his merciful love fills the earth. **R.**

Yes, the Lord's eyes are on those who fear him,  
who hope in his merciful love,  
to rescue their souls from death,  
to keep them alive in famine. **R.**

Our soul is waiting for the Lord,  
He is our help and our shield.  
May your merciful love be upon us,  
as we hope in you, O Lord. **R.**

**Second Reading (2 Timothy 1:8b-10)** 

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**A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy**

Beloved: Take your share of suffering for the Gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Acclamation (Matthew 17:5)**

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

**Gospel (Matthew 17: 1-9)** 

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**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.



**Sunday March 5**

And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” He was still speaking, when behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.” And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

**R. Lord, hear us!**

For good and compassionate leaders in Africa and in other parts of the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. R.

For good witnesses of the word of God in Africa and all over the world; for fruitful apostolates and pastoral works, let us pray to the Lord our God. R.



For the end of terrorism and for those threatened and killed for their faith, let us cry out to the Lord our God. R.

For peace, mercy, security in the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. R.

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this sacrifice, O Lord, we pray, cleanse us of our faults and sanctify your faithful in body and mind for the celebration of the paschal festivities. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Communion Antiphon** (*Mt 17:5*)

**This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

As we receive these glorious mysteries, we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord, for allowing us while still on earth to be partakers even now of the things heaven. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# Monday March 6

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (25) 26:11-12)* **Redeem me, O Lord, and have mercy on me. My foot stands on level ground: I will bless the Lord in the assembly.**

## Collect

O God, who have taught us to chasten our bodies for the healing of our souls, enable us, we pray, to abstain from all sins, and strengthen our hearts to carry out your loving commands. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## First Reading ————— *(Daniel 9:4b-10)*

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel**

O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and merciful love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances; we have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers,



and to all the people of the land. To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us confusion of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those that are near and those that are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery which they have committed against you. To us, O Lord, belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; because we have rebelled against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants

the prophets. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (78) 79:8.9.11.13)***

**R. O Lord, do not treat us according to our sins.**

Do not remember against us, the guilt of former times. Let your compassion hasten to meet us; for we have been brought very low. R.

Help us, O God our saviour, for the sake of the glory of your name. Free us and forgive us our sins, because of your name. R.

Let the groans of the prisoners come before you, your strong arm relieve those condemned to die. R.

Then we, your people, the flock of your pasture, will

give you thanks forever and ever. From age to age we will recount your praise! R

### **Acclamation**

*(John 6:63c.68c)*

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** Your words, Lord are Spirit and life; you have the words of eternal life. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Gospel**

*(Luke 6:36-38)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be

forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Accept in your goodness these our prayers, O Lord, and set free from worldly attractions those you allow to serve the heavenly mysteries. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Lk 6:36)* **Be merciful as your Father is merciful, says the Lord.**

**Prayer after Communion**  
May this communion,  
O Lord, cleanse us of  
wrongdoing and make us

heirs to the joy of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**The Measure You Give Is  
the Measure You  
Get Back.**

**Commentary**

**Daniel 9:4-10 /  
Luke 6:36-38**

“Give and it shall be given unto you.” By giving so that it will be given unto us, Jesus was actually reechoing the words of the Lord’s prayer: “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” Our first reading contains the prayer of Daniel. It is a plea for God’s mercy over the sins of the people of Israel. If God forgives us our faults, we too should forgive others. Jesus is saying: “Be merciful even as your Father is merciful.” If we say God is our Father, we must resemble Him by treating people with mercy, kindness and compassion.

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***



# Tuesday March 7

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## *Ferial*

or **Sts Perpetua and Felicity, memorial**

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Psalm (18) 19:8)* **The souls of the Saints are rejoicing in heaven, the Saints who followed the footsteps of Christ, and since for love of him they shed their blood, now with Christ they exult for ever.**

prayers, that we may ever grow in your love. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading** ————— *(Isaiah 1:10.16-20)*

**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

### **Collect**

O God, at the urging of whose love the Martyrs Saints Perpetua and Felicity defied their persecutors and overcame the torment of death, grant, we ask, by their

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from

before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. “Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm —**  
**(Psalm (49) 50:8-9.16bc-**  
**17.21 and 23)**

**R. To one whose way is blameless; I will show the salvation of God.**

“I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices; your offerings are always before me. I do not take more bullocks from farms, nor goats from among your herds.” R.

“How can you recite my commandments, and take my covenant on your lips, you who despite correction, and cast my words behind you.” R.

“You do this, and should I keep silence? Do you think that I am like you? I accuse you, lay the charge before you. A sacrifice of

praise gives me honour, and to one whose way is blameless, I will show the salvation of God.” R

### **Acclamation**

*(Ezekiel 18:31)*

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, says the Lord, and get yourselves a new heart and new spirit. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Gospel** ————— *(Matthew 23:1-12)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes

and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi by men. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher and you are all brethren. And call no man your father on earth,

for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ. He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

As we joyfully offer, O Lord, this day's sacrifice, recalling the heaven, sent victory of Saints Perpetua

and Felicity, we proclaim by it your mighty deeds and rejoice at having gained their glorious intercession. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(2 Cor 4:11)* **For the sake of Jesus we are given up to death, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal flesh.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

As we draw everlasting joys, O Lord, from our participation in this Sacrament, and from

the Memorial of Saints Perpetua and Felicity, we humbly implore, that by your gift we may truly

understand what you grant us to enact in diligent service. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Commentary

### You Are what You Do.

Isaiah 1:10 /  
Matthew 23:1-12

Your actions are the true test of your identity. The scribes and Pharisees prided themselves as the religious leaders of the day; they preached the truth but practiced falsehood. Is there a contradiction between what I preach and what I do? Am I living in pretence? Then, do what the prophet Isaiah says in today's first reading: "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doing from before my eyes, learn to do good, seek justice, correct oppression, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow..." (Isaiah 1:16).

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***





# Wednesday March 8

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## **Ferial**

or Saint John of God, optional memorial

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Ps (37) 38:22-23)* **Forsake me not, O Lord! My God, be not far from me! Make haste and come to my help, O Lord, my strong salvation!**

### **Collect**

Keep your family, O Lord, schooled always in good works, and so comfort them with your protection here as to lead them graciously to gifts on high. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading**

***(Jeremiah 18:18-20)***

**A reading from the Book of Jeremiah**

They said, “Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not heed any of his words.” Give heed to me, O Lord, and listen to my plea. Is evil a recompense for

good? Yet they have dug a pit for my life. Remember how I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away your wrath from them. The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
*(Psalm (30) 31:5-6.14.15-16)*

**R.** Save me, O Lord, in your merciful love.

Release me from the snare they have hidden, for you indeed are my refuge. Into your hands I commend my spirit. You will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.  
**R.**

I have heard the slander of the crowd; terror all around me, as they plot

together against me, as they plan to take my life. **R.**

But as for me, I trust in you, O Lord; I say, “You are my God. My lot is in your hands, deliver me from the hands of my enemies and those who pursue me.” **R.**

**Acclamation** (*John 8:12*)

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** I am the light of the world, says the Lord; he who follows me will have the light of life. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

**Gospel** —————  
*(Matthew 20:17-28)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he

took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.” Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right and one at your left, in your kingdom.” But Jesus

answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the chalice that I am to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” He said to them, “You will drink my chalice, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.” And when the Ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rules of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant,

and whoever would be first among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Look with favour, Lord, on the sacrificial gifts we

offer you, and by this holy exchange undo the bonds of our sins. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

**(Mt 20:28) The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Grant, we pray, O Lord our God, that what you have

given us as the pledge of immortality may work for our eternal salvation.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**To Be Great,  
Be a Servant.**

**Commentary**

**Jeremiah 18:18-20 /  
Matthew 20:17-28**

The shortest key to greatness is service. If respect begets respect, then service begets promotion. One who cannot serve cannot also lead. If you ever find yourself in a position of service, consider it a privilege, an opportunity to improve yourself, to learn and to grow. If Joseph had not been a slave, there was no way he would have functioned well as a Prime Minister. Life's greatest lessons are not taught in the comfort of our classroom desks but in tears, sweat and blood.

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***



# Thursday March 9

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## **Ferial**

or **Saint Frances of Rome**, *optional memorial*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Ps (138) 139:23-24)* **Test me, O God, and know my thoughts. See that my path is not wicked, and lead me in the way everlasting.**

### **Collect**

O God, who delight in innocence and restore it, direct the hearts of your serv-ants to yourself, that, caught up in the fire of your Spirit, we may be found steadfast in faith and effective in works.

Through Christ our Lord...  
**Amen.**

### **Reading** ————— ***(Jeremiah 17:5-10)***

**A reading from the Book of Jeremiah**

Thus says the Lord: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wil-

derness, in an uninhabited salt land. “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it? “I the Lord search the mind and try the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his fruit of his doings.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (1:1.2.3.4 and 6)***

**R. Blessed the man who has placed his trust in the Lord.**

Blessed indeed is the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the path with sinners, nor abides in the company of scorners, but whose delight is the law of the Lord, and who ponders his law day and night. R.

He is like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters, that yields its fruits in due season, and whose leaves shall never fade; and all that he does shall prosper. R.

Not so are the wicked, not so! For they, like winnowed chaff, shall be

driven away by the wind. For the Lord knows the way of the just, but the way of the wicked will perish. R

### **Acclamation** (*Luke 8:15*)

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** Blessed are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Gospel** ————— (*Luke 16:19-31*)

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to the Pharisees, “There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted

sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.’ “But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that you in your lifetime received



your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said 'No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will

repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.'" The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

By this present sacrifice, we pray, O Lord, sanctify our observance, that what Lenten discipline outwardly declares it may inwardly bring about. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Ps (118) 119:1)* **Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.**

**Prayer after Communion**

May this sacrifice, O God, remain active in its effects and work ever

more strongly within us. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Listen to Lazarus.****Commentary****Luke 16:19-31**

My name is Lazarus, remember me? My body was always covered with sores, your house dogs loved licking my sores. The rich man invited people to dine with him but he did not consider me a human being because I was poor. When I died, I went to heaven and was taken to Abraham's side. From the midst of hell, he saw me and begged Abraham to ask me to dip my finger in water to cool his tongue. In life, he had gallons of water to drink and waste but now he is begging for just one drop. Be careful, hell is real.

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***



# Friday March 10

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (30) 31:2.5)* In you, O Lord, I put my trust, let me never be put to shame; release me from the snare they have hidden for me, for you indeed are my refuge.

## Collect

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, purifying us by the sacred practice of penance, you may lead us in sincerity of heart to attain the holy things to come. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading

*(Genesis (36) 37:3-4. 12-13a. 17b-28)*

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because, he was the son of his old age; and he made him a long robe with sleeves. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him. Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. And Israel said

to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.” So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. They saw him afar off, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild beast has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.” But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood, cast him into this pit here in the wilderness, but

lay no hand upon him” -that he might rescue him out of their hand, to restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore, and they took him and cast him into a pit. The pit was empty, there was no water in it. Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit it is if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our

own flesh.” And his brothers heeded him. Then Midianite traders passed by; and they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver; and they took Joseph to Egypt. The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
**(Psalm <sup>(104)</sup> 105:16-17.18-19.20-21)**

**R.** Remember the wonders the Lord has done.

But he called down a famine of the land; he broke their staff of bread. He had sent a man ahead

of them, Joseph, sold as a slave. **R.**

His feet were weighed down in chains, his neck was bound with iron, until what he said came to pass, and the word of the Lord proved him true. **R.**

Then the king sent orders and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free. He made him master of his house and ruler of all his possessions. **R.**

**Acclamation (John 3:16)**  
**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son; that whoever believes in him should have eternal life. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

***Gospel*** —————  
***(Matthew 21:33-43,45-46)***

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to chief priests and the elders of the people, “Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterwards he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will

respect my son.’ “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance’. And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give the fruits in their seasons.” Jesus said to them, “Have you ever read in the Scriptures: ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes’? therefore I tell

you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it.” When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. But they tried to arrest him, they feared the multitudes, because they held him to be a prophet. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May your merciful grace prepare your servants, O God, for the worthy celebration of these mysteries, and lead them to it by a devout way of life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(1 Jn 4:10)* **God loved us, and sent his Son as expiation for our Sins.**

### Prayer after Communion

Having received this pledge of eternal salvation, we pray, O Lord, that we may

set our course so well as to attain the redemption you promise. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Repent from Jealousy.

### Commentary

Psalm 105 /  
Matthew 21:33-46

The parable of the householder who planted a vineyard teaches us a lesson; that God expects us to be fruitful. No man is without talents, you too are a bundle of potentials. Some people fail to notice what they have so they become jealous and start seeking for ways to quench the light of others. This was the sad reality with Joseph and his brothers. As the tenants killed the son of the householder, so did the brothers of Joseph conspire to sell him to the Medianites. Little did they know that their wickedness could not stop the dream from becoming a reality.

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***





# Saturday March 11

2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (144) 145:8-9)* **The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. How good is the Lord, to all, compassionate to all his creatures.**

## Collect

O God, who grant us by glorious healing remedies while still on earth, to be partakers to the things of heaven, guide us, we pray, through this present life and bring us to that light in which you dwell. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading

***(Micah 7:14-15.18-20)***

**A reading from the Book of the Prophet Micah**

Shepherd your people, [O Lord,] with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, who dwell alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land; let them feed in Bashan, and Gilead as in the days of old. As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt I will show them marvellous things. Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger for ever because he delights in mercy. He will again have compassion upon us, he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, as you have sworn to our father from the days of old. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (102) 103:1-2.3-4.9-  
10.11-12)***

**R. The Lord is  
compassionate and  
gracious.**

holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits. R.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with mercy and compassion. R.

He will not always find fault; nor persist in his anger forever. He does not treat us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our faults. R.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so strong his mercy for those who fear him. As far the east is from the west, so far from us does he remove our transgressions. R.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his

**Acclamation** (*Luke 15:18*)

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.** I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. **Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

**Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Luke 15:1-3.11-32*)**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

At that time: The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable: “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger

of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I

will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.” And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and

is found.’ And they began to make merry. “Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.’ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Behold, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!’ And he

said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Through these sacred gifts, we pray, O Lord, may our redemption yield its fruits, restraining us from unruly desires and leading

us onward to the gifts of salvation. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Lk 15:32)* **You must rejoice, my son, for your brother was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

May your divine Sacrament, O Lord, which we have received, fill the inner depths of our heart and by

its working mightily within us, make us partakers of its grace.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## The Return of the Prodigal Son

## Commentary

Micah 7:14-20, Psalm 103 /  
Luke 15:1-3,11-32

While eating with Matthew and the tax collectors, Jesus said: "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:32) The story of the Prodigal Son shows us the depth of God's compassion. As Micah tells us in today's first reading: "God does not retain His anger forever because he delights in mercy". (Micah 7:18). No wonder the Father said to the elder brother: "This your brother was dead, and is now alive; he was lost and is found." God is inviting us today to rise from where we have fallen, to say with the Prodigal Son, "I will arise and go to my Father..."

***Rev Fr. Abu Evaristus, Benin City-Nigeria***



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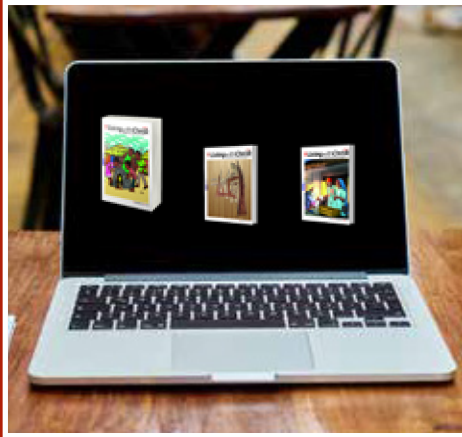
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