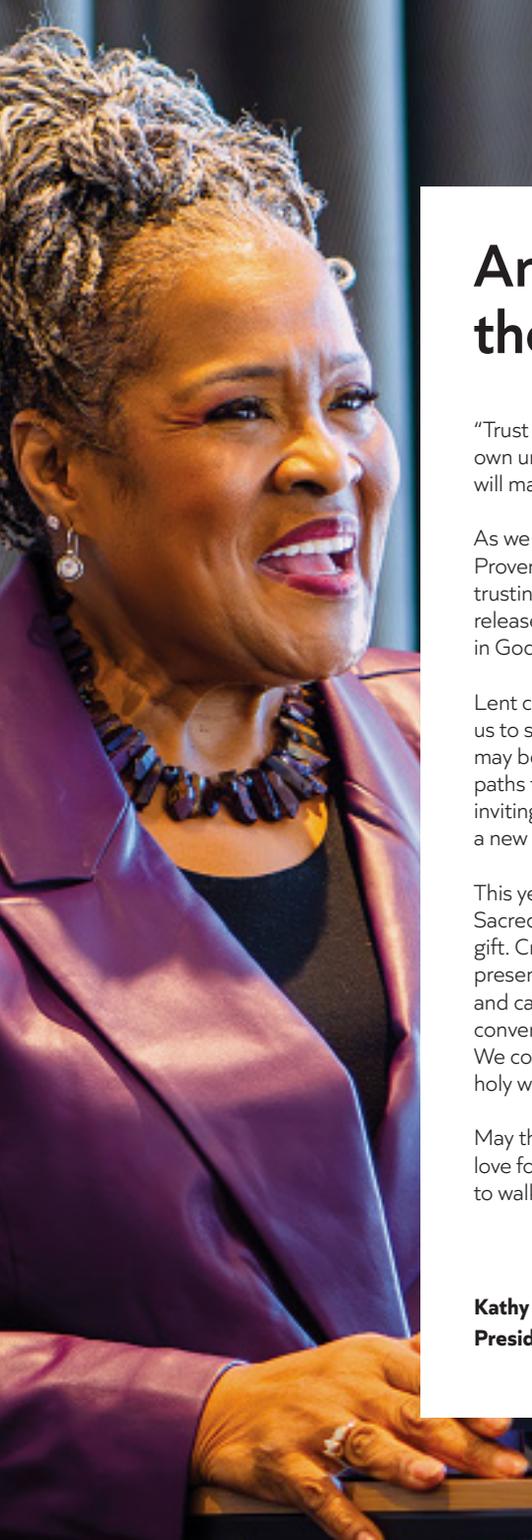


**CARLOW**  
UNIVERSITY

Devoted to the Future of You.

# Now is the Acceptable Time.

Daily Reflections for Your 2026 Lenten Journey



# An Invitation from the President

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5–6, NIV)

As we enter this Lenten season, these familiar words from Proverbs call us back to the heart of our faith: trust. A trusting that invites us to loosen our grip on certainty, release the illusion of control, and place our lives more fully in God’s care.

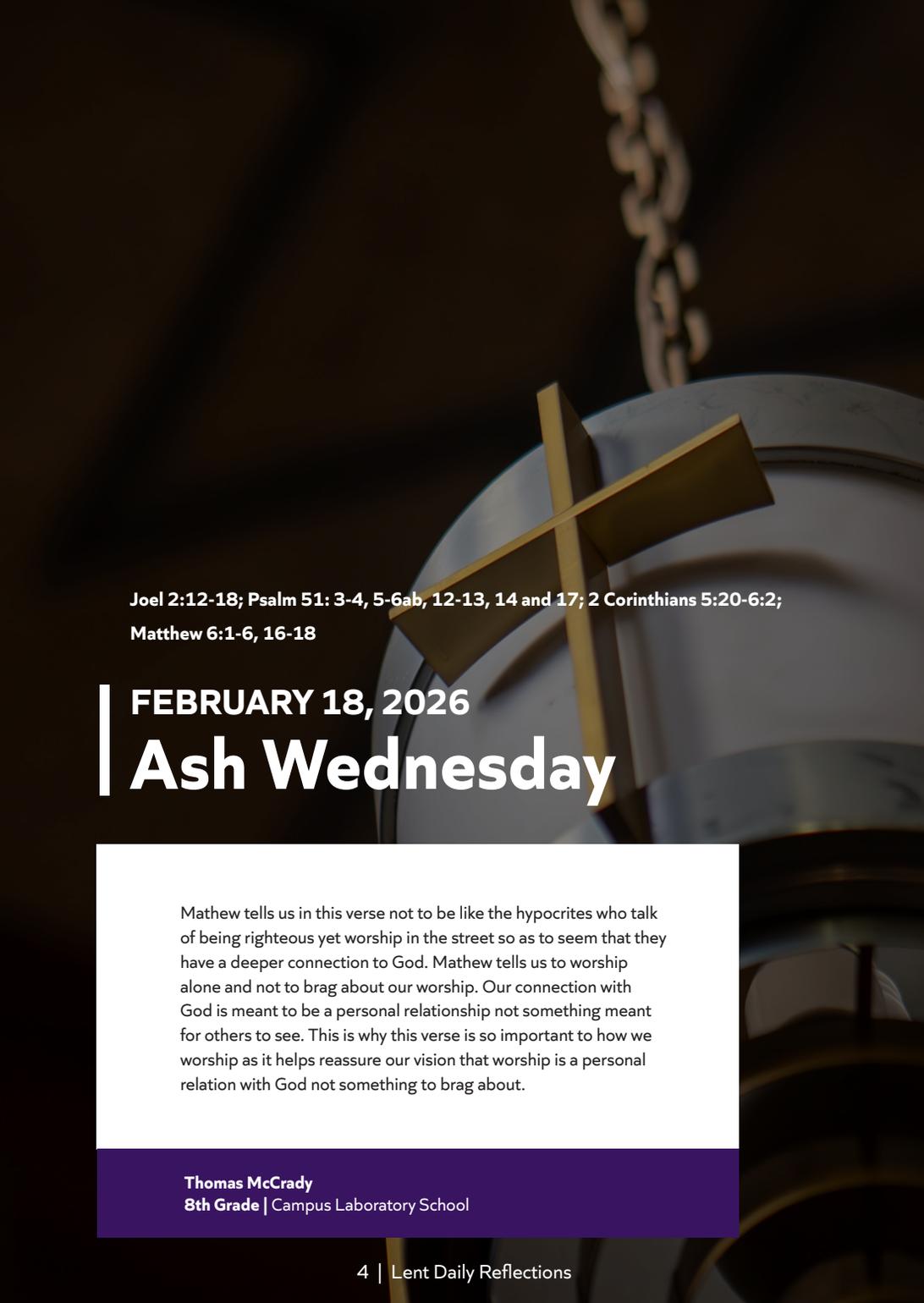
Lent creates space for this kind of surrender. It encourages us to slow down, listen more closely, and notice where we may be rushing ahead of God. Where are we clinging to paths that no longer lead to life? And where might God be inviting us to pause, acknowledge His presence, and follow a new way forward?

This year, as we reflect on the Mercy Value of the Sacredness of Creation, we are reminded that all life is a gift. Creation, in all its beauty and fragility, reflects the presence of God and calls us to live with greater reverence and care. At Carlow, many of us choose compassion over convenience by standing with those who are overlooked. We commit ourselves, again and again, to the hard and holy work of building a more just and merciful world.

May this sacred season deepen our faith, strengthen our love for one another, and renew our shared commitment to walk humbly with God and with all of creation.

**Kathy W. Humphrey, PhD**  
**President, Carlow University**





Joel 2:12-18; Psalm 51: 3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2;  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

**FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

# Ash Wednesday

Mathew tells us in this verse not to be like the hypocrites who talk of being righteous yet worship in the street so as to seem that they have a deeper connection to God. Mathew tells us to worship alone and not to brag about our worship. Our connection with God is meant to be a personal relationship not something meant for others to see. This is why this verse is so important to how we worship as it helps reassure our vision that worship is a personal relation with God not something to brag about.

**Thomas McCrady**  
8th Grade | Campus Laboratory School

DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20; PSALM 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6; LUKE 9:22-25

FEBRUARY 19, 2026

# Thursday After Ash Wednesday

We are given the gift of free choice to live righteously or in evil, to be good or bad, to love or hate, and to forgive or not forgive.

God gave us this free gift of choice from our birth to our death. God does not control us like puppets because He wants us to come freely to Him. Jesus came to save us by His own life, teachings, suffering, crucifixion, burial, resurrection and His ascension into heaven.

I pray that we choose to walk the path to righteousness. I pray during this Lenten Season and beyond that we will examine ourselves while spending time in God's Holy Word and meditating upon His Scriptures and spending time in prayer and conversation with God just as our Savior Jesus Christ prayed to the Father. I want us to remember to keep Jesus in our hearts and minds and to thank Him for our salvation. Let the Holy Spirit lead and guide you. Amen.

**Kenneth Ference, Lead Communication Officer**  
Carlow University Police



ISAIAH 58:1-9A; PSALM 51:3-4, 5-6AB, 18-19; MATTHEW 9:14-15

FEBRUARY 20, 2026

# Friday After Ash Wednesday

The book of Isaiah foretells the coming of the Messiah who will bring salvation. Here Isaiah addresses fasting with the right heart, not one that is hollow or superficial but loving and compassionate towards others. Our fast should serve to align our priorities with the will of God- releasing those bound unjustly, setting free the oppressed, sharing bread with the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked. In Matthew's Gospel, the disciples of John the Baptist ask Jesus why he and his disciples do not fast. Jesus replies: why mourn when the Bridegroom is with you? The days will come when the Bridegroom is taken away. In this same way, we both celebrate the Good News of our Lord and we long for His return. This Lenten season may our fast reflect Christ's humility, love and compassion, and may we be inspired by our desire to become one with Him.

**Anna Bamonte Torrance, Esq., Chancellor**  
Diocese of Pittsburgh



ISAIAH 58:9B-14; PSALM 86: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6; LUKE 5:27-32

**FEBRUARY 21, 2026**

# Saturday After Ash Wednesday

For us as God's people to speak of our steadfast faith and express our desire to grow in unity with Christ is a good thing within itself, but to genuinely represent heaven on earth through our actions is a step even further. Within Isaiah 58:9-14, God calls us to pursue our faith beyond solely traditional rituals, emphasizing the ways in which we are to carry ourselves with kindness, compassion, and justness. We have a call to action to love both God Himself as well as His people. As we approach Lent, it is essential to cherish life's little moments as we gather with family and friends, but more importantly, we should take the time to consider those who suffer from oppression, hunger, or injustice. God calls us to "love our neighbors," which involves us loving beyond solely those we are familiar with.

**Mariah Woods-Payne**  
Psychology '29

GENESIS 2:7-9, 3:1-7; PSALM 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17; ROMANS 5:12-19; MATTHEW 4:1-11

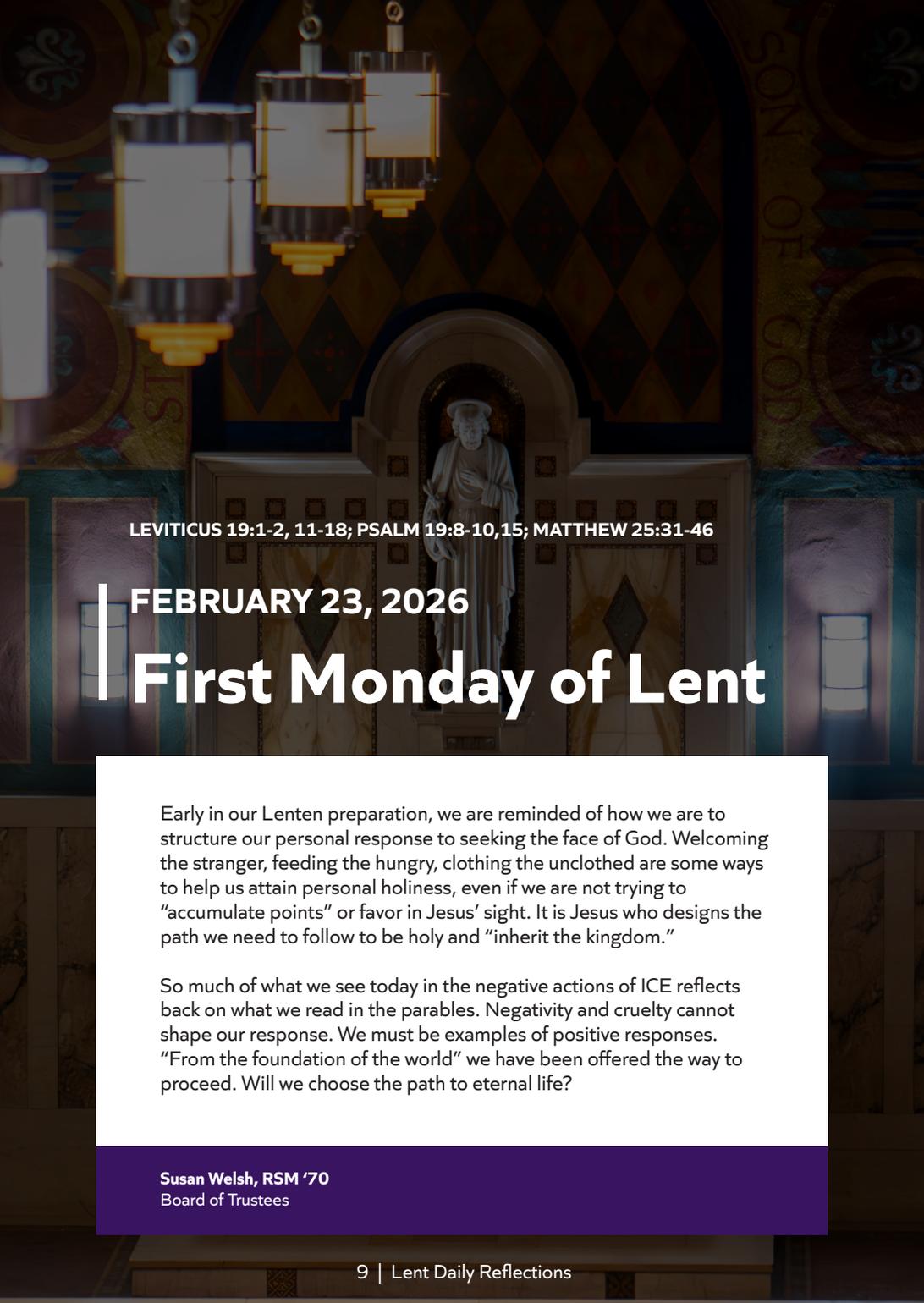
FEBRUARY 22, 2026

# First Sunday of Lent

I can recall in my early 20's listening to Reverend Charles Stanley on the PAT bus (at the time) heading into work for the day, and he was teaching about a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart as sacrifices that are pleasing to God. What I learned was that neither a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart in no way meant being weak, ashamed or defeated. On the contrary, those sacrifices describe an honest and humble position before God. Over the years, as I have grown in my faith, I've come to learn that a broken spirit means letting go of my self-reliance and pride. It's me acknowledging that I need God and even more, I want to know more of him and his character. A broken and contrite heart means that I am genuinely sorrowful for my sins and desire to be restored and transformed by God daily so that I can be more like him.

I know that if I come before God with a posture of a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart it will create space for his grace, healing and renewal. I try to daily to apply this by coming to God in full honesty, hiding nothing, releasing control, and inviting him to search my heart. I do this because I desire my life to honor and worship him because I love him. As I reflect on this Easter holiday, I celebrate his death, burial and resurrection with a broken heart and broken and contrite heart.

**Maleea Johnson, EdD**  
Director of Student Connection & Mission



LEVITICUS 19:1-2, 11-18; PSALM 19:8-10,15; MATTHEW 25:31-46

FEBRUARY 23, 2026

# First Monday of Lent

Early in our Lenten preparation, we are reminded of how we are to structure our personal response to seeking the face of God. Welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, clothing the unclothed are some ways to help us attain personal holiness, even if we are not trying to “accumulate points” or favor in Jesus’ sight. It is Jesus who designs the path we need to follow to be holy and “inherit the kingdom.”

So much of what we see today in the negative actions of ICE reflects back on what we read in the parables. Negativity and cruelty cannot shape our response. We must be examples of positive responses. “From the foundation of the world” we have been offered the way to proceed. Will we choose the path to eternal life?

**Susan Welsh, RSM '70**  
Board of Trustees

**ISAIAH 55:10-11; PSALM 34: 4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19; MATTHEW 6:7-15**

**FEBRUARY 24, 2026**

# **First Tuesday of Lent**

During this Lenten season, we are invited to let God's word shape us the way deep learning does—broadening our perspective, challenging our assumptions, and nurturing what is good within us. Isaiah reminds us that genuine growth often unfolds quietly, much like the learning, mentoring, and discovery that happen each day across our campus. In Matthew, Jesus teaches that prayer is not about polished language but about authenticity. As we pray the Lord's Prayer, may we do so with intention, trusting that God already understands our hopes, anxieties, and needs.

Together, these passages call us to show up sincerely—in our studies, our teaching, our research, and our relationships—believing that even small acts of faithfulness can create meaningful change. May this season encourage us to live in ways that quietly cultivate justice, compassion, and community both within the University and beyond.

**Rhonda E. Maneval, EdD, RN, ANEF, FAAN**  
**Interim Provost | Dean of the College of Health and Wellness**

FEBRUARY 25, 2026

# First Wednesday of Lent

In today's scriptures, I am reminded that God is a God of second chances, not just for Jonah, but for you and me as well. Jonah finally responds to God's call, and Nineveh responds with humility and action, not hesitation. Their change wasn't dramatic or complicated; it was sincere. They turned their hearts, shifted their behavior, and made space for God to move. And He did.

Jesus tells the crowd that the only sign they need is the sign of Jonah. In other words, the invitation is already clear. Sometimes I find myself waiting for more proof, more clarity, more reassurance, but Jesus reminds me that the real question isn't whether God is speaking. The question is whether I am willing to respond.

As I begin this Lenten journey, these readings pull me toward the quiet work of repentance, the kind that happens gently within the heart before it ever shows up in my actions. Repentance isn't about shame; it's about alignment. It's recognizing the places where I've drifted, naming what needs to shift, and then courageously walking in a new direction. Just like Nineveh, even the smallest turn of the heart catches God's attention.

This season, I want to listen more quickly, respond more fully, and turn more freely. I want to stop asking for "one more sign" when God has already whispered the truth I need. I want to trust that when I turn toward God, He meets me with compassion, understanding, and a chance to begin again.

My prayer today:

Lord, help me recognize where You are calling me to begin again. Give me the courage to turn, the strength to follow, and the humility to let my life reflect the change my heart desires.

**Janelle M. Fields**  
Executive Assistant to the President

ESTHER C:12, 14-16, 23-25; PSALM 138:1-2AB, 2CDE-3, 7C-8; MATTHEW 7:7-12

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

# First Thursday of Lent

“Lord, your love endures forever.”

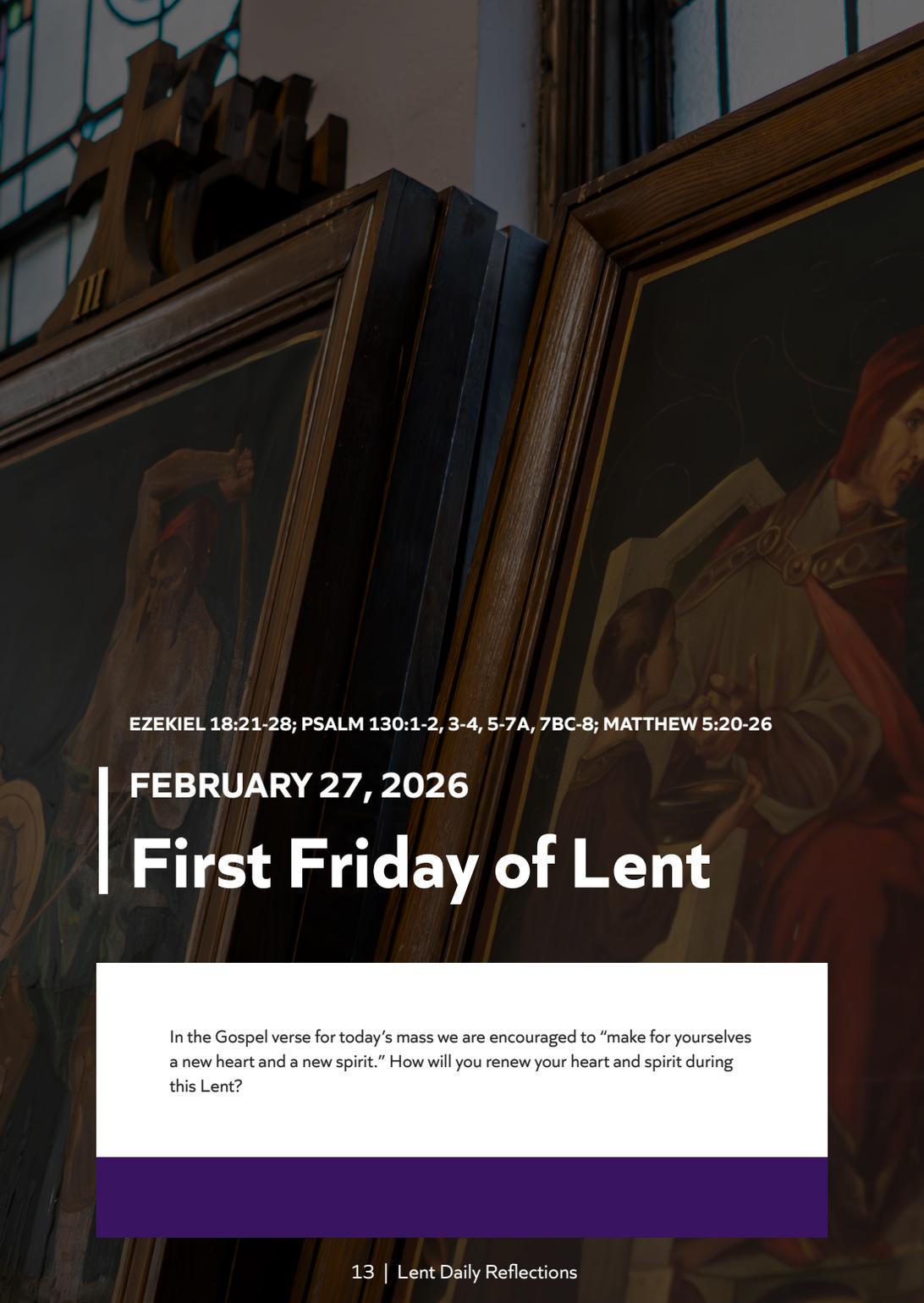
The Psalms have always been one of my favorite books—something that probably isn’t surprising coming from a musician. They express every corner of the human heart, and Psalm 138 speaks especially deeply to my own journey. The psalmist proclaims, “I thank you, Lord, with all my heart... When I called, you answered me; you built up strength within me.” I relate to these words personally. There was a moment in my life, lying in a hospital bed, when all I could pray was, “Please God, don’t take me from my family yet.” In that moment of fear and surrender, God heard me. He strengthened me, lifted me, and began shaping a new chapter in my life.

Psalm 138 reminds us that God’s love is both protective and purposeful: “Your right hand saves me... The Lord will complete what He has done for me.” Those verses reflect what I’ve lived—Christ is truly the ultimate Healer and Counselor. In health, in work, and in every valley, He has guided me step by step. Life becomes far more peaceful when we allow God to take control. His love is steady, His mercy unwavering, and His plan continues even when we cannot see it clearly. Looking back, I can see how God used even my most difficult moments to draw me closer to Him.

And so, with the psalmist, I pray with gratitude:

“Lord, I will praise you with all my heart, for Your love endures forever.”

**Joseph Keffer, Minister of Music**  
Office of Campus Ministry



EZEKIEL 18:21-28; PSALM 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7A, 7BC-8; MATTHEW 5:20-26

**FEBRUARY 27, 2026**

# First Friday of Lent

In the Gospel verse for today's mass we are encouraged to "make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit." How will you renew your heart and spirit during this Lent?

DEUTERONOMY 26:16-19; PSALM 119: 1-2, 4-5, 7-8; MATTHEW 5:43-48

FEBRUARY 28, 2026

# First Saturday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26 is the great covenant that God promises to His people. I like to consider verse 16 to 19 as a mutual agreement between Israel and God. An important fact to address, however, is that if the people “fail,” God will not abandon them. This is much like His presence in our lives today. As we are walking with Him during Lent, we can use verses 16 to 19 as a reminder and factor of commitment to walk in God’s way, and listen to His voice above all else. We are shown through these verses of God’s divine potential and grace in our lives. As well as His interest in the present, making everyday his full attention to our thoughts, needs, and prayers. Similar to the people Moses gathered, we have a brand new day every morning. Yesterday, there may have been mistakes or choices, but they are behind now. And for the tomorrow, anxiety, and worry we may hold, that is in God’s hands, not ours. Today God is offering us His wisdom, and today He is always with us asking us to follow Him.

**Deborah Garza**  
Secondary Education '29



GENESIS 12:1-4A; PSALM 33: 4-5, 18-19, 20, 22; TIMOTHY 1:8B-10; MATTHEW 17:1-9

**MARCH 1, 2026**

# Second Sunday of Lent, Transfiguration Sunday

Just like Abraham in Genesis 12:1-4, we are called to “bless others through” the important work we do – whether that’s inside or outside the classroom, on campus or out in the community. We leave the comforts and familiarity of home to answer our calls of service, care, advocacy, and education. We are guided in our work by those who came before us, including Catherine McAuley and the other Sisters of Mercy who answered their calls to uplift those in need. When we are met with anxiety, fear, or uncertainty like the disciples in Matthew 17:1-9, we are reminded of Jesus’ words to not be afraid — for it is during these times that we should remember our purpose.

**Jillian Malcom, Writing Support Coordinator, Adjunct Instructor**  
Center for Academic Achievement

DANIEL 9:4B-10; PSALM 79:8-9, 11, 13; LUKE 6:36-38

MARCH 2, 2026

# Second Monday of Lent

God knows about all the sins we've committed, yet he forgives us anyway.

We're quick to judge our peers, even without knowing all the mistakes they've made.

That's pretty counterintuitive.

The idea of forgiving someone can sound intimidating, but it doesn't have to be something you start and finish in one day. Try holding the door for someone you don't get along with, maybe even smile at them in the process. Give yourself actionable steps and feel free to start small. God is gentle with us, so we should be gentle with ourselves in this process. Lent is challenging which leaves room for us to grow. Be intentional about the decisions you make and the things you say. Just because someone has hurt you, doesn't give you a reason to hurt them back.

**Jane Windsheimer**

Communications: Advocacy & Social Change, 2026



ISAIAH 1:10, 16-20; PSALM 50:8-9, 16BC-17, 21, 23; MATTHEW 23:1-12

MARCH 3, 2026

# Second Tuesday of Lent

Walk Humbly with God

Tuesday of the 2nd Week of Lent reminds us that faith is about how we live, not just what we say. God calls His people to be honest and humble. He asks them to change their ways, care for others, and follow what is right. This is a time to look at our actions and see if they match our faith.

The readings today speak about true worship and real obedience. Isaiah tells the people to clean their hearts and help those in need. The psalm shows that God wants righteousness, not empty sacrifice. Jesus teaches that real greatness comes from being a servant.

Tuesday of the 2nd Week of Lent gives us a chance to reflect on pride and hypocrisy. We are reminded that God values humility and mercy. Lent is not only a season of giving up things but also of growing in kindness and truth. Each small act of love brings us closer to God's way.

[Young-Catholics.com](http://Young-Catholics.com)

JEREMIAH 18:18-20; PSALM 31: 5-6, 14, 15-16; MATTHEW 20:17-28

MARCH 4, 2026

# Second Wednesday of Lent

When we read these scriptures together, we begin to see suffering not only as something we must endure with God's help, but also as something that can deepen our own well of humility and compassion. Suffering can reorient and shape us into people more capable of love, service, and solidarity with one another.

Jeremiah's words remind us that sometimes doing what is right still leads to misunderstanding, resistance, or even betrayal. This challenges us to reflect on whether we are willing to remain faithful even when it costs us comfort or approval. His story pushes us to question how deeply we trust God's purposes when our circumstances feel unjust or confusing.

The Psalm then draws our attention inward. The words "Into your hands we commit our spirit" call us toward a posture of surrender rather than control. Instead of asking God simply to remove the suffering we face, we hear an invitation to place our identity, fears, and expectations into God's hands. Trust becomes less about escaping hardship and more about being transformed within it.

In Matthew, Jesus reframes suffering as part of His mission of love. His response to the request for positions of honor reminds us that we, too, often misunderstand what greatness looks like. Hardship can expose our desire for status, recognition, or ease. Yet Jesus teaches that true greatness is found in serving others and embracing humility. Our own suffering, then, can become a refining fire—softening our pride, expanding our compassion, and aligning us more closely with Christ's example.

**Keely Baronak, EdD, Dean**  
College of Education and Social Work

JEREMIAH 17:5-10; PSALM 1:1-4; LUKE 16:19-31

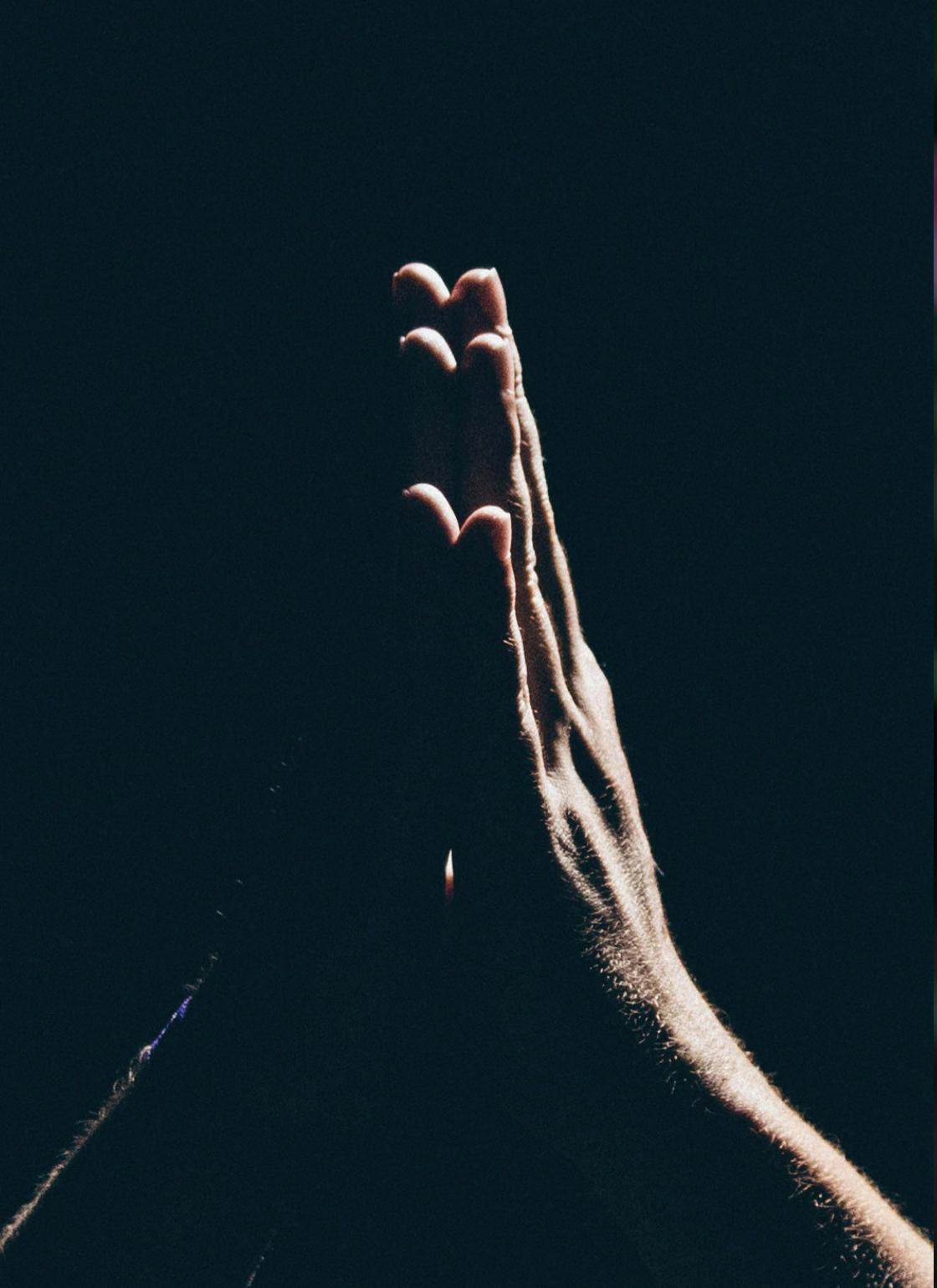
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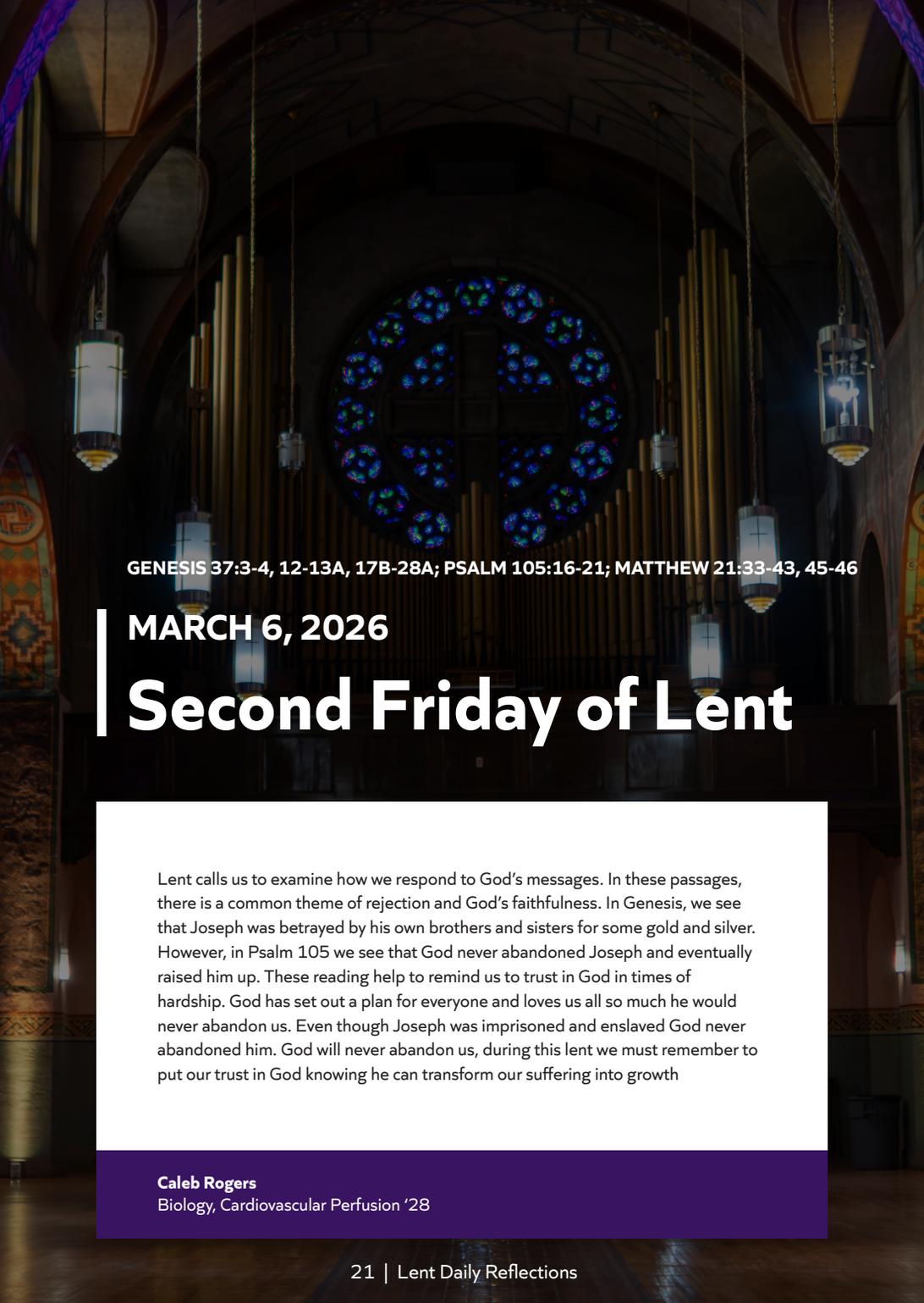
# Second Thursday of Lent

Both readings contrast good and evil. Jeremiah warns that one “whose heart turns from Yahweh ...is like dry scrub in the wastelands...”. But the one who trusts in God is blessed and will be fruitful. In the gospel passage, Luke presents the rich man who enjoyed the wealth of this world with Lazarus, the poor, sick and hungry man at his gate. After death, the rich man begs for relief from his suffering and asks that Lazarus be sent to his brothers to warn them. But he is told that they have Moses and the prophets to guide them.

We are called to trust in God and not in the riches of this world. Look for the prophets in our world today who call us to greater faith and trust in God. Listen!

Bonnie Heh, RSM '69





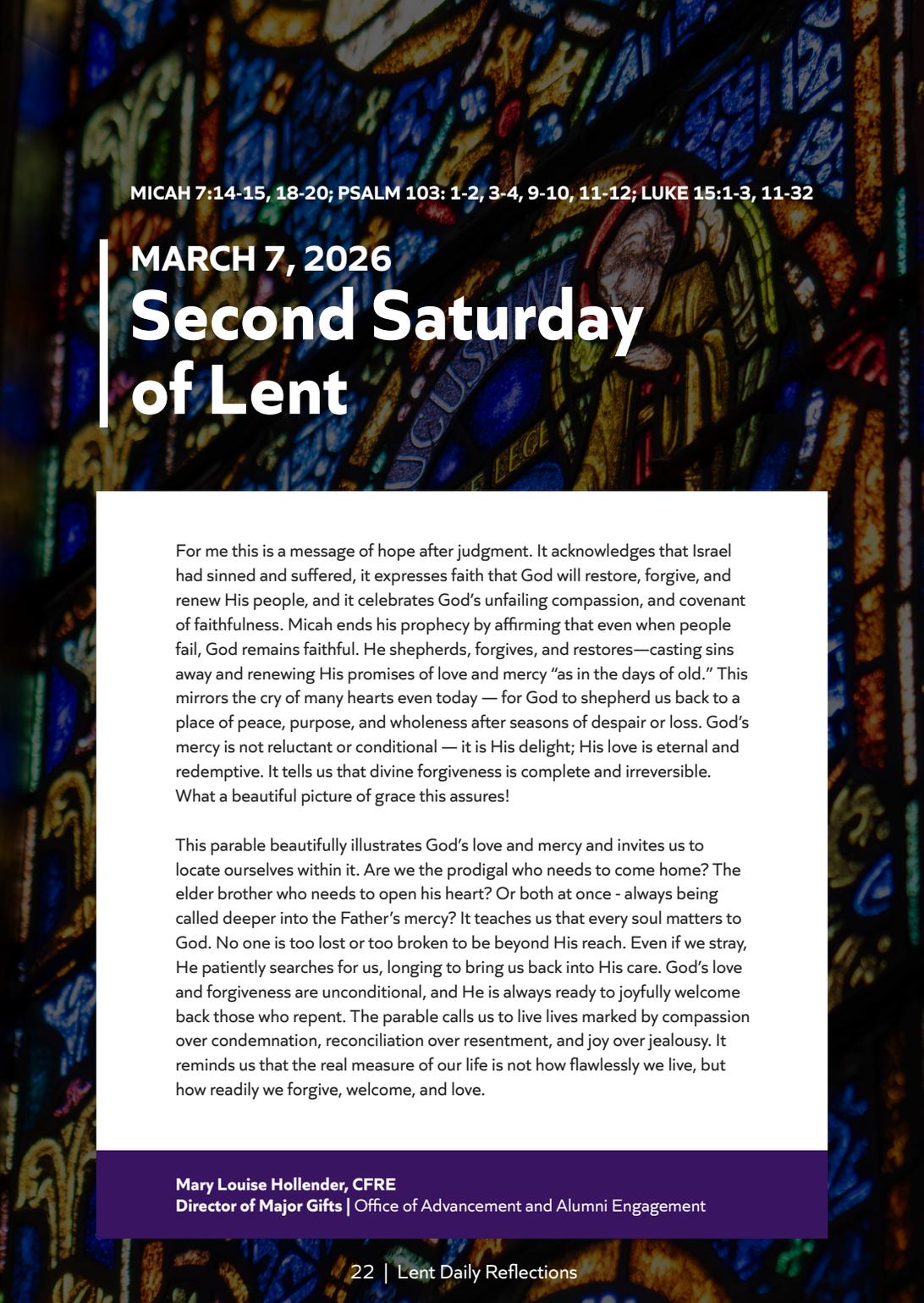
GENESIS 37:3-4, 12-13A, 17B-28A; PSALM 105:16-21; MATTHEW 21:33-43, 45-46

**MARCH 6, 2026**

# Second Friday of Lent

Lent calls us to examine how we respond to God's messages. In these passages, there is a common theme of rejection and God's faithfulness. In Genesis, we see that Joseph was betrayed by his own brothers and sisters for some gold and silver. However, in Psalm 105 we see that God never abandoned Joseph and eventually raised him up. These reading help to remind us to trust in God in times of hardship. God has set out a plan for everyone and loves us all so much he would never abandon us. Even though Joseph was imprisoned and enslaved God never abandoned him. God will never abandon us, during this lent we must remember to put our trust in God knowing he can transform our suffering into growth

**Caleb Rogers**  
Biology, Cardiovascular Perfusion '28



MICAH 7:14-15, 18-20; PSALM 103: 1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12; LUKE 15:1-3, 11-32

MARCH 7, 2026

# Second Saturday of Lent

For me this is a message of hope after judgment. It acknowledges that Israel had sinned and suffered, it expresses faith that God will restore, forgive, and renew His people, and it celebrates God's unfailing compassion, and covenant of faithfulness. Micah ends his prophecy by affirming that even when people fail, God remains faithful. He shepherds, forgives, and restores—casting sins away and renewing His promises of love and mercy “as in the days of old.” This mirrors the cry of many hearts even today — for God to shepherd us back to a place of peace, purpose, and wholeness after seasons of despair or loss. God's mercy is not reluctant or conditional — it is His delight; His love is eternal and redemptive. It tells us that divine forgiveness is complete and irreversible. What a beautiful picture of grace this assures!

This parable beautifully illustrates God's love and mercy and invites us to locate ourselves within it. Are we the prodigal who needs to come home? The elder brother who needs to open his heart? Or both at once - always being called deeper into the Father's mercy? It teaches us that every soul matters to God. No one is too lost or too broken to be beyond His reach. Even if we stray, He patiently searches for us, longing to bring us back into His care. God's love and forgiveness are unconditional, and He is always ready to joyfully welcome back those who repent. The parable calls us to live lives marked by compassion over condemnation, reconciliation over resentment, and joy over jealousy. It reminds us that the real measure of our life is not how flawlessly we live, but how readily we forgive, welcome, and love.

**Mary Louise Hollender, CFRE**  
Director of Major Gifts | Office of Advancement and Alumni Engagement

EXODUS 17:3-7; PSALM 95: 1-2, 6-7, 8-9; ROMANS 5:1-2, 5-8; JOHN 4:5-42

MARCH 8, 2026

# Third Sunday of Lent

Wandering in the desert, the Israelites were thirsty for lack of water and began to wonder if God was still with them. In their despair, God responded with mercy providing water from a great rock. Life as a college student can sometimes feel like a desert with feelings of isolation, pressure, or emotional fatigue. Paul reminds us that amid our complicated circumstances, Jesus can be a source of inner peace and hope because he loves us with a love that is not earned but given as a gift. At the town water well, in the heat of the day, the Samaritan woman, ostracized by her community, encounters Jesus. He greets her with mercy and compassion, inviting her to drink his living water and make a fresh start. The season of Lent invites us to bring our whole selves to an encounter with Christ, to drink deeply from the well of his unconditional love and welcome his grace to accompany us on our individual and our collective journeys.

**Michael J. Sherrill, MDiv, PhD, Director of Campus Ministry**  
Campus Minister | Office of Campus Ministry

2 KINGS 5:1-15AB; PSALM 42:2-3, 43:3-4; LUKE 4:24-30

MARCH 9, 2026

# Third Monday of Lent

## EXPECTATIONS

In Kings we hear of Naaman, a Syrian man of power, an army commander, who had a skin disease called leprosy- probably a condition like psoriasis or eczema that set Naaman apart as different. Yet when he was convinced to go to Samaria and see the prophet Elisha, the prophet did not meet Naaman's expectation. Elisha did not greet him or leave his house and sent instructions that caused Naaman to feel disrespected and angry. Yet when he followed the instructions and was cured, Elisha refused payment from Naaman. Again, Naaman's expectations were not met. But this time he was able to put his expectations aside.

In Luke after Jesus read the scripture passage in his hometown synagogue "all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth." But Jesus continues speaking. For those who had lived and known Jesus and his family for 30 plus years his words caused a fury and violence intent on killing Jesus. They were expecting Jesus to do for them his neighbors what he did in Capernaum. Was Capernaum excluded from their circle of acceptance?

What would happen if each of us LISTEN, PAUSE and CLARIFY when our expectations are not met before judging, speaking, acting?

**Linda Werthman, RSM**  
Board of Trustees

DANIEL 3:25, 34-43; PSALM 25: 4-5AB, 6 AND 7BC, 8-9; MATTHEW 18:21-25

MARCH 10, 2026

# Third Tuesday of Lent

When Peter asks how many times he must forgive, I recognize myself in his question. I, too, want forgiveness to have limits. But Jesus' answer — "not seven times, but seventy-seven times" — reminds me that true forgiveness has no boundaries.

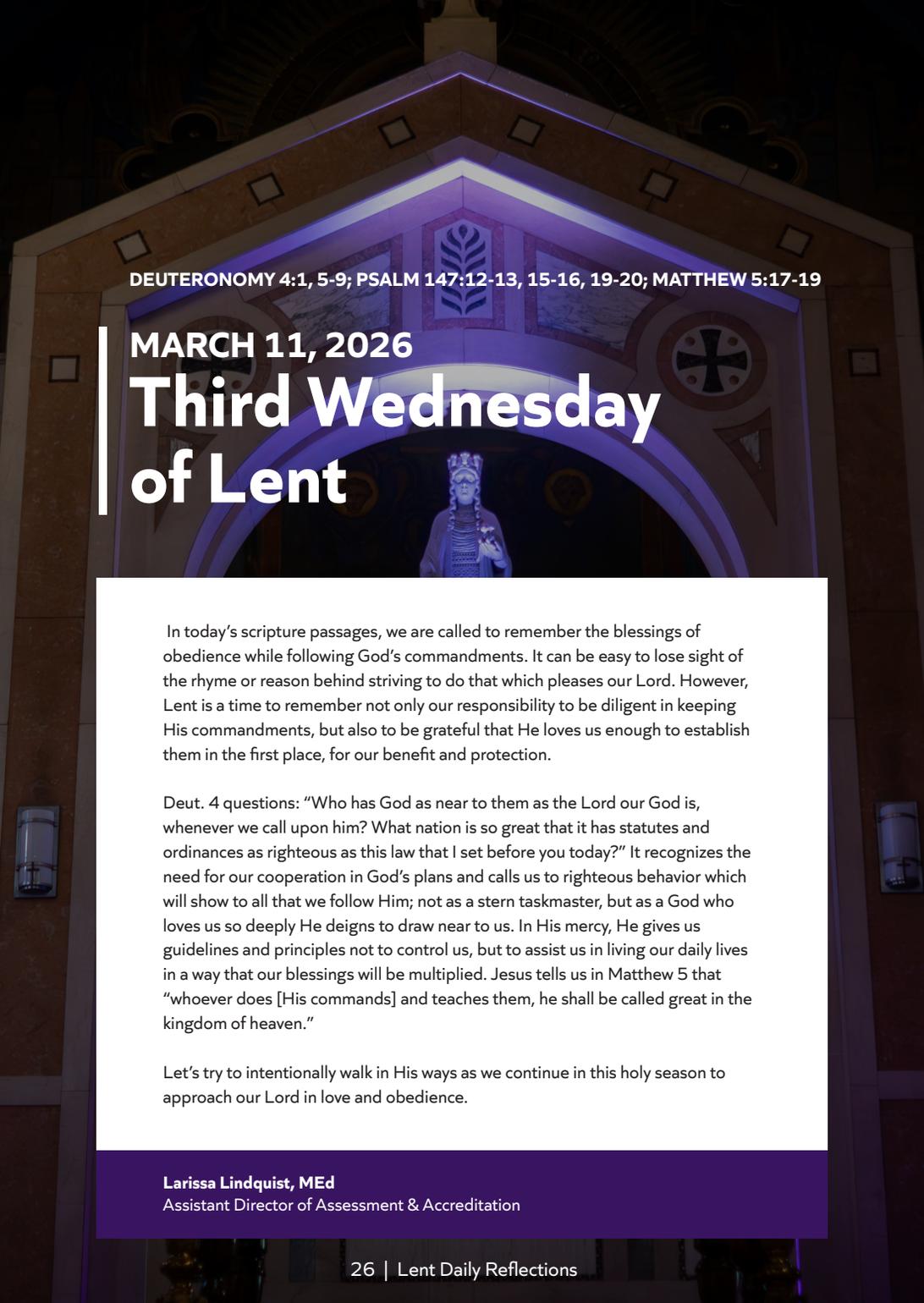
The servant's enormous debt in the parable shows how deeply I depend on God's mercy. I could never repay what I owe, yet God forgives me freely and completely. Remembering this challenges me to extend the same grace to others.

Forgiveness isn't always easy. It means letting go of anger and choosing compassion, even when it feels undeserved. But every time I forgive, I experience a little more freedom — the kind that reflects God's heart. This passage reminds me that forgiveness is not a transaction; it's a way of life in the kingdom of heaven.

The Daniel passage reminds me that even when everything seems lost, faith can still find its voice. The people of Israel had no temple, no leaders, and no offerings to give — only their hearts. Yet that was enough. Their humble prayer, rising from a place of exile and shame, shows that God values sincerity more than ritual.

I think of moments when I've felt empty or distant from God, when I had nothing to offer but a broken spirit. Like Azariah, I'm reminded that a contrite heart is the truest form of worship. God does not abandon those who turn to Him with honesty and trust.

**Janet Guidas, Manager, Annual Giving**  
Office of Advancement and Alumni Engagement



DEUTERONOMY 4:1, 5-9; PSALM 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20; MATTHEW 5:17-19

MARCH 11, 2026

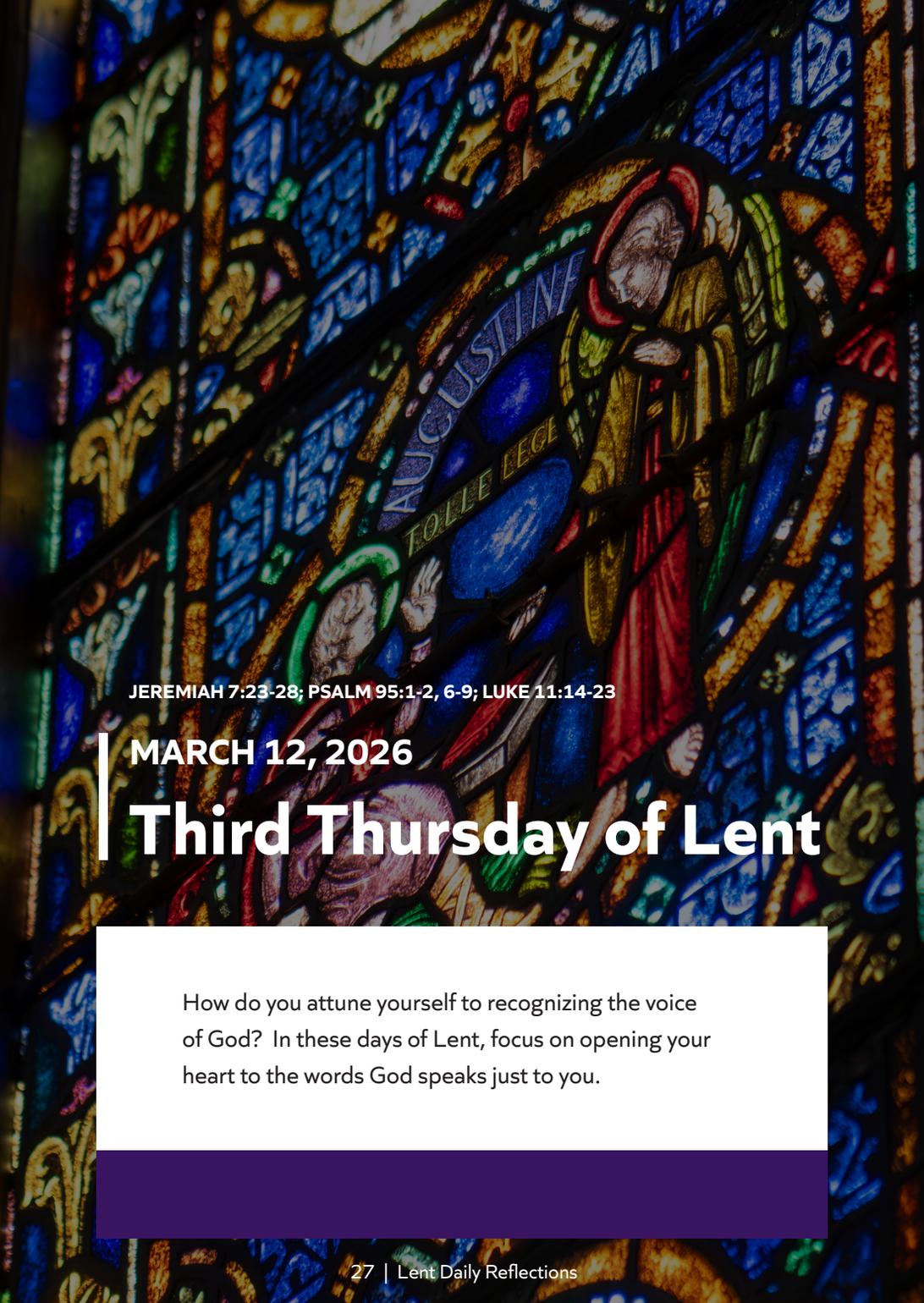
# Third Wednesday of Lent

In today's scripture passages, we are called to remember the blessings of obedience while following God's commandments. It can be easy to lose sight of the rhyme or reason behind striving to do that which pleases our Lord. However, Lent is a time to remember not only our responsibility to be diligent in keeping His commandments, but also to be grateful that He loves us enough to establish them in the first place, for our benefit and protection.

Deut. 4 questions: "Who has God as near to them as the Lord our God is, whenever we call upon him? What nation is so great that it has statutes and ordinances as righteous as this law that I set before you today?" It recognizes the need for our cooperation in God's plans and calls us to righteous behavior which will show to all that we follow Him; not as a stern taskmaster, but as a God who loves us so deeply He deigns to draw near to us. In His mercy, He gives us guidelines and principles not to control us, but to assist us in living our daily lives in a way that our blessings will be multiplied. Jesus tells us in Matthew 5 that "whoever does [His commands] and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Let's try to intentionally walk in His ways as we continue in this holy season to approach our Lord in love and obedience.

**Larissa Lindquist, MEd**  
Assistant Director of Assessment & Accreditation



JEREMIAH 7:23-28; PSALM 95:1-2, 6-9; LUKE 11:14-23

MARCH 12, 2026

# Third Thursday of Lent

How do you attune yourself to recognizing the voice of God? In these days of Lent, focus on opening your heart to the words God speaks just to you.

HOSEA 14:2-10; PSALM 81: 6C-8A, 8BC-9, 10-11AB, 14 AND 17; MARK 12:28-34

MARCH 13, 2026

# Third Friday of Lent (Feast of St. Patrick)

In today's reading from Hosea, we encounter the God of hope and mercy, who looks upon Israel with compassionate, unconditional love. The verses begin with a plea for repentance followed by God's assurance of forgiveness. God offers Israel a future filled with promise if Israel would walk in God's ways.

Jesus, in the gospel, offers us a path towards this same future of hope through loving God and loving our neighbor. This, he explains, is the one, and greatest commandment. Jesus tells us we cannot love God if we do not love our neighbor, for in our neighbor (the immigrant, those imprisoned, the sick, the poor...) is where God dwells. The brokenness of our world would begin to heal if people everywhere could learn to recognize God in each other. Let us pray for the grace this Advent to look deeply into our own hearts. May God's profound love for us teach us to reach out with this same love to others.

Rita Harasiuk, RSM '73



HOSEA 6:1-6; PSALM 51:3-4, 18-19, 20-21AB; LUKE 18:9-14

MARCH 14, 2026

# Third Friday of Lent

What a beautiful challenge – love or in other words, mercy, not sacrifice. I think it is easy in a way during Lent to resolve to do some kind of special sacrifice or discipline. I would do it on my own terms, in my own way. But God asks of me mercy, not sacrifice.

In his book, *The Works of Mercy: the Heart of Catholicism*, James Keeenan, SJ says that “our entire theological tradition is expressed in terms of mercy, which I define as the willingness to enter into the chaos of another.”

Who of us does not find chaos in the lives of our families and friends? It is the loss of a job, an unexpected diagnosis, an addiction... To walk with the other through their chaos, to make myself available on their time, that is what God asks of me. I pray that during this Lenten season I might learn more deeply what it means to be mercy.

**Mary Fanning, RSM**  
Board of Trustees



1 SAMUEL 16:1B, 6-7, 10-13A; PSALM 23: 1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6; EPHESIANS 5:8-14; JOHN 9:1-41

MARCH 15, 2026

# Fourth Sunday of Lent

Light. Seeing. Believing. The readings speak to all three. The deeper meaning is, of course, believing in God and his Son. I think of Catherine McAuley in the House of Mercy on Baggot St., at the prie-dieu, contemplating the crucifixion and God's tender mercy. She designed the Mercy cross as a white cross on a black background, sans the figure of Christ. She wanted the Sisters to imagine themselves on the cross, a white cross – light against the dark. That's a powerful message.

I also think of the Pharisees challenging the blind man, asking who gave him his sight. It is similar to the process of Catherine becoming a saint. Every miracle must be investigated, verified. There is no doubt in my mind Catherine was a woman of deep faith, with dedication to serving the needs of others. She understood her mission of Mercy; she saw "the Light".

**Cynthia Nicola, EdD, Professor Emerita**  
Adjunct Faculty | Dept. of Business Management, Accounting and Ethics

ISAIAH 65:17-21; PSALM 30: 2 AND 4, 5-6, 11-12A AND 13; JOHN 4:43-54

**MARCH 16, 2026**

# Fourth Monday of Lent

An official comes to Jesus and asks him to cure his son and he does. What we can learn from this is we should ask Our Lord for help in all situations. We should never be afraid to ask for his help and trust that he will help us. He might not give us the answer we want or in the same time frame we desire but he will always help in usually very subtle ways. He knows what is going on in our life and is waiting for us to ask him for help because he knows what we need. We should remember this and talk to him each day and not only ask him for things but also do things for him. The things we should do for him are out of Love and they are often very simple things like waking up and offering our day for him, offering our hourly work or studying for people, family, or friends, making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament where he is waiting for us in every tabernacle, being cheerful, helping others and being kind to them, and loving your spouse and family and letting them know that every day.

Always remember that Our Lord is waiting for you to reach out to him and ask for help because he is always there for you and loves you very much. Remember that you are a child of God and that he takes care of his children always.

**Mark T. Sulecki**  
Vice President of Finance



EZEKIEL 47:1-9, 12; PSALM 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; JOHN 5:1-16

MARCH 17, 2026

# Fourth Tuesday of Lent

The Psalm reading for today reminds me that even in our darkest moments, when hope feels distant, when grief feels closest, and when time taunts us with fear and uncertainty, God remains our refuge and strength. These verses gently assure us that we are never alone. As we look at the world today, amid chaos, confusion, hatred, and desolation, God continues to guide, love, and support His people.

In His presence, there is both a promise of peace and a reminder of His enduring power: "He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; He burns the shields with fire." Because of this, we can trust that all things are possible through God and through hope. Peace and mercy are not fleeting; they remain eternal in God's presence. Our faith, and our belief in His nearness, sustains us and nurtures the deepest parts of our souls.

**Sara Oliver-Carter**  
Vice President for Mission Integration

ISAIAH 49:8-15; PSALM 145:8-9, 13CD-14, 17-18; JOHN 5:17-30

**MARCH 18, 2026**

# Fourth Wednesday of Lent

The Bible verse John 5:17-30 is a defense that is given by Jesus to several Jewish Leaders who are trying to kill him. They are trying to kill Jesus for healing on the sabbath and for claiming he had an equal relationship with God. This is important because it shows Jesus' unity of work, shared authority, eternal life, and fair judgment. Jesus defends the work he did on the Sabbath by telling them that he and the Father are working together and that he does only what he sees the Father doing, which demonstrates their unity in their work. Jesus also explains the shared authority between him and the Father and that the Father has given him the power to judge humanity and to give life. This shows the depth of the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus promises that the people who listen to him and believe his message will have eternal life and will forever avoid judgment. Jesus finishes his defense by saying that his judgment is because he acts on the Father's will, not his own. The Bible verse John 5:17-30 shows Jesus' deep relationship and understanding with the Father while defending his beliefs.

**Maya Somova 8th Grade** | Campus  
Laboratory School

2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Psalm 89: 2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a

MARCH 19, 2026

# Fourth Thursday of Lent

St. Joseph Prayer

St. Joseph, patron saint of the unexpected,

How freely you stepped into the unknown

With your unwavering yes.

St. Joseph, dreamer of dreams,

How attuned your heart was, waking or sleeping,

To the promptings of angels.

St. Joseph, nurturing father,

How openly you accepted your unconventional family,

Lighting the way for us, too, to embrace all.

St. Joseph, there is still so much we don't know about you,

But maybe that is your gift to us,

That we may see in the father of Jesus a mystery

That sanctifies the hidden and untold in our own lives.

May we, too, live our days in the holy shadow of your son.

Amen.

**Cameron Bellm, PhD**  
Writer and Speaker



WISDOM 2:1A, 12-22; PSALM 34:17-21, 23; JOHN 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

MARCH 20, 2026

# Fourth Friday of Lent

Nestled between the two pretty challenging readings the church offers us today – murder and mayhem - is the responsorial psalm from Psalm 34. The refrain – “The Lord is near to the broken hearted” is such a warming, comforting thought – the assurance that even on, perhaps especially on, our hardest days God is right by our side.

Psalm 34 also tells us that God watches over all our bones lest any of them be broken. All 206 of them! This line is reminiscent of psalm 139 which reminds us that God knows us through and through from having watched our bones take shape as we were being knit together in the womb. God cares about us right down to our bones in an intimacy that is unfathomable! All through the scriptures we are reminded again and again that to our innermost, innermost selves we are embraced in God’s love and care and mercy.

**Sheila Carney, RSM, Special Assistant to the President for Mercy Heritage**  
Center for Mercy Heritage and Service



ISAIAH 7:10-14, 8:10; PSALM 7: 2-3, 9BC-10, 11-12; HEBREWS 10:4-10; LUKE 1:26-38

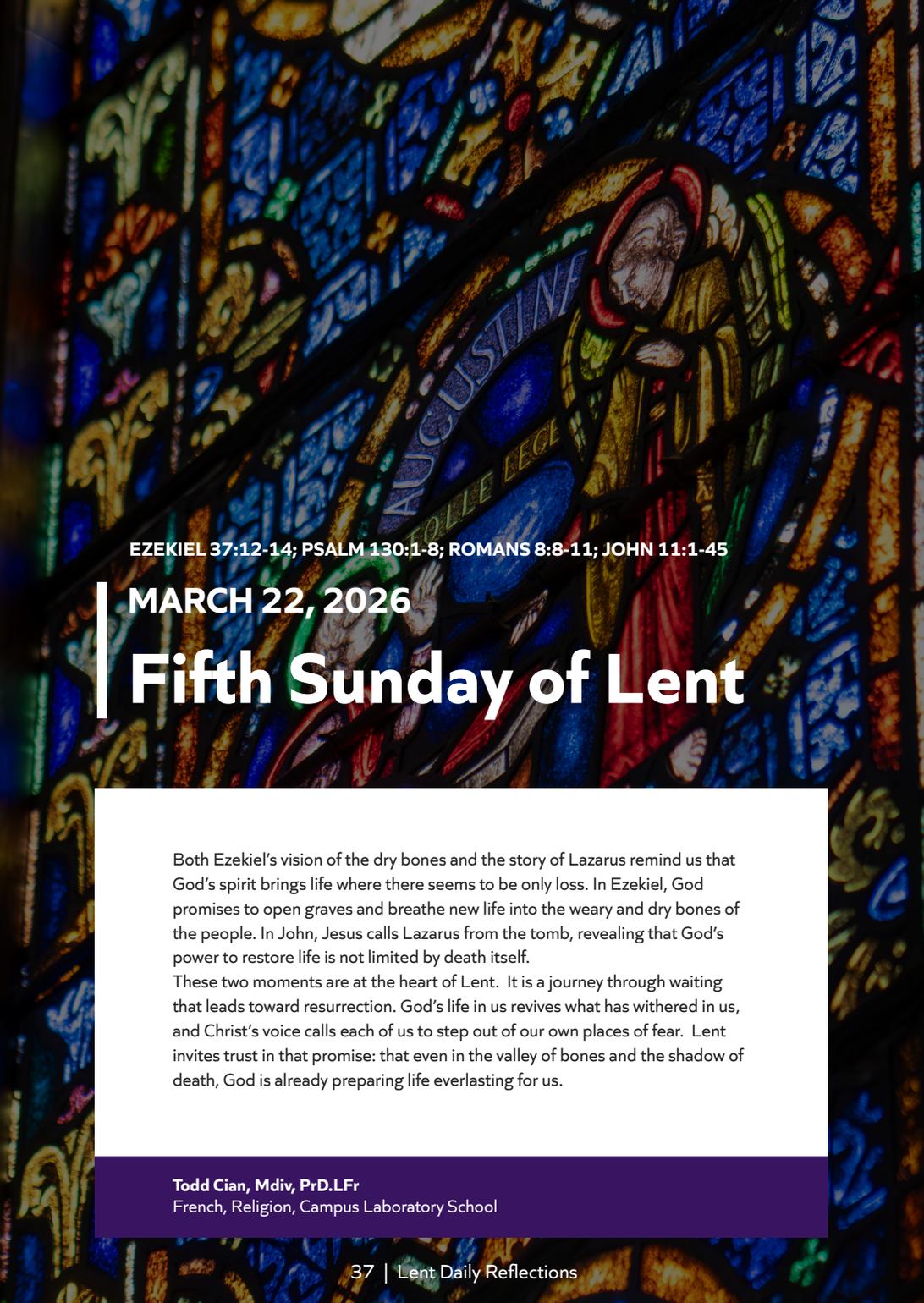
MARCH 21, 2026

# Fourth Saturday of Lent

The readings for today remind us of God's unwavering promise to be with us. Isaiah foretells Emmanuel—God with us—a sign of hope in uncertain times. Hebrews calls us to remember that Christ's coming transforms sacrifice into a willing offering of love. In Luke, Mary responds to God's invitation with courage and trust, saying simply, "Let it be done."

During Lent, we are invited to model Mary's openness and Christ's self-giving spirit. At CLS, our Mercy values call us to bring this "yes" into daily life—through compassion, service, and hope for one another. Catherine McAuley believed in responding generously to the needs before us, trusting that God walks with us in every act of care. May we enter these weeks with hearts ready to listen, to serve, and to say "yes" to the work God is calling us to do.

**Sarah Posti, Head of School**  
Campus Laboratory School



EZEKIEL 37:12-14; PSALM 130:1-8; ROMANS 8:8-11; JOHN 11:1-45

MARCH 22, 2026

# Fifth Sunday of Lent

Both Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones and the story of Lazarus remind us that God's spirit brings life where there seems to be only loss. In Ezekiel, God promises to open graves and breathe new life into the weary and dry bones of the people. In John, Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb, revealing that God's power to restore life is not limited by death itself.

These two moments are at the heart of Lent. It is a journey through waiting that leads toward resurrection. God's life in us revives what has withered in us, and Christ's voice calls each of us to step out of our own places of fear. Lent invites trust in that promise: that even in the valley of bones and the shadow of death, God is already preparing life everlasting for us.

**Todd Cian, Mdiv, PrD.LFr**  
French, Religion, Campus Laboratory School



DANIEL 13: 41C-62; PSALM 23: 1-6; JOHN 8: 1-11

MARCH 23, 2026

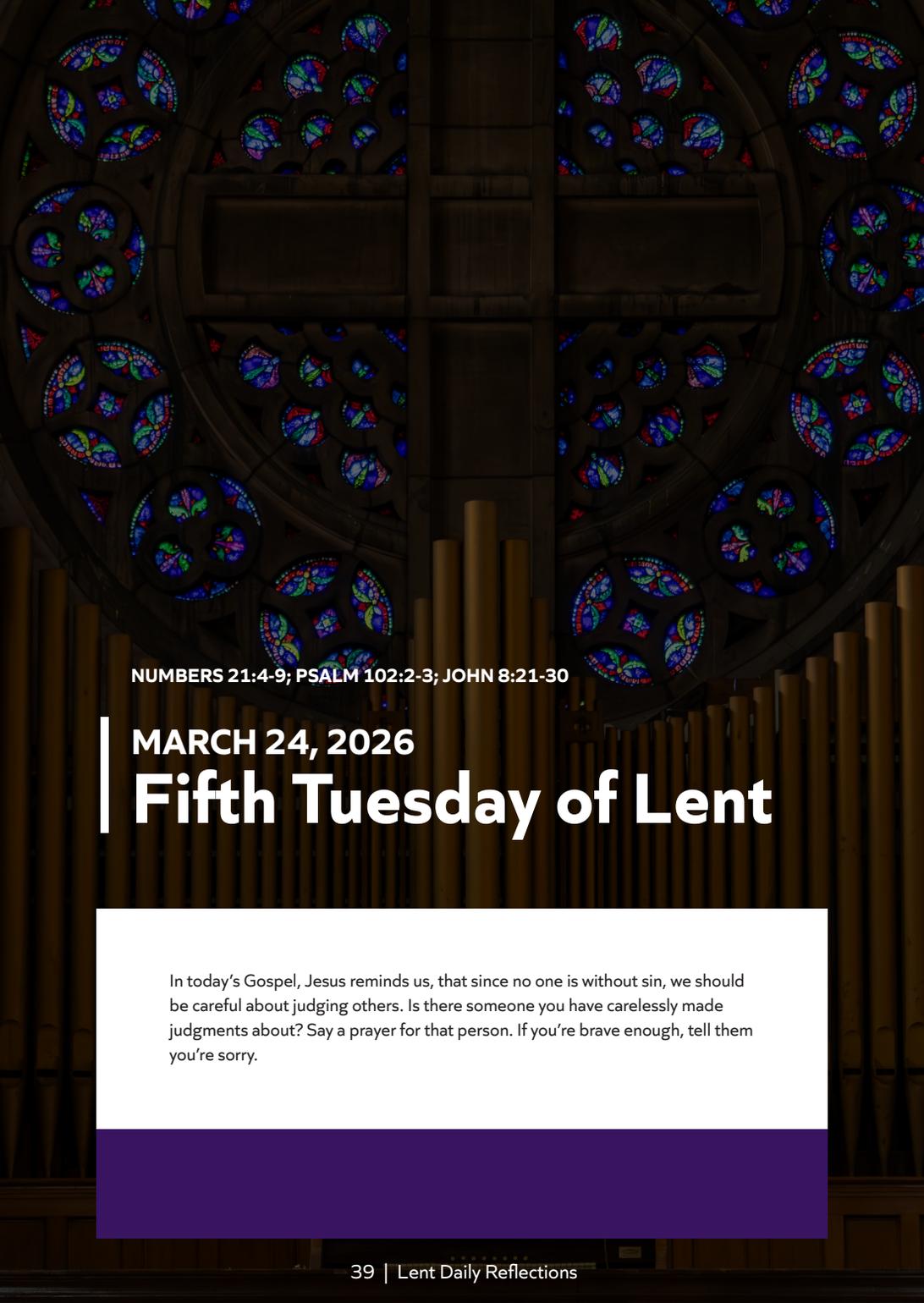
# Fifth Monday of Lent

Looking around at the world and this country I often find myself asking, “Where is justice? Is there mercy? What is truth and goodness?” These readings ask those questions along with me.

In both the Old and New Testament readings we meet a woman accused of a crime who is put on trial without proper proof of guilt or regard for her situation. In Biblical times, a woman’s word was dismissed and only men had a voice or could own property. Disillusioned by dishonesty and pride, the ‘justice’ system committed each woman to death; however, God intervened showing forgiveness and revealing the truth in his merciful love.

Our world is filled with injustice, greed, pride, and dishonesty. Like the women in these readings, so many people are hurt and oppressed by a flawed and broken system. Yet, our trust is in God. For though we may walk through hard times and dark places His mercy and goodness will be revealed and will pursue us all the days of our life.

**Bethel Fernando**  
Psychology, '28



NUMBERS 21:4-9; PSALM 102:2-3; JOHN 8:21-30

MARCH 24, 2026

# Fifth Tuesday of Lent

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us, that since no one is without sin, we should be careful about judging others. Is there someone you have carelessly made judgments about? Say a prayer for that person. If you're brave enough, tell them you're sorry.

DANIEL 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; PSALM 40: 7-8A, 8B-9, 10, 11; JOHN 8:31-42

MARCH 25, 2026

# Fifth Wednesday of Lent

Today's Old Testament reading brought back a memory. When I was nine or ten, I frequently visited my grandmothers. This one day, I visited my paternal grandmother. My aunt was playing a 78-rpm record telling the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — shackled, fully clothed, and ordered by the king to be put into the “white-hot furnace” because they would not worship his god. I visualized it and listened to it again. What was it? Did it remind me of my maternal grandfather who worked at the blast furnace making steel in McKeesport, PA? It surely wasn't the names of the three men whose names I still stumble over! Maybe it was disbelief that someone would be so cruel as to torture others. Yet, they walked out of the furnace unscathed, praising God! In John's gospel, Jesus is trying to convince his followers that he was sent from the Father; he was teaching them the truth that would set them free. Try as he might, he couldn't keep them from killing him! And what about today? What do we see? How should we respond? How should we pray? Dear loving God, open our minds and hearts to assist those among us who are food insecure, who live in fear of loved ones being handcuffed, shackled and herded onto trucks to detention centers. May we respond to your grace to fearlessly speak the truth so that others will be set free. We ask this in your holy Name. Amen.

Jeanne Snyder, RSM



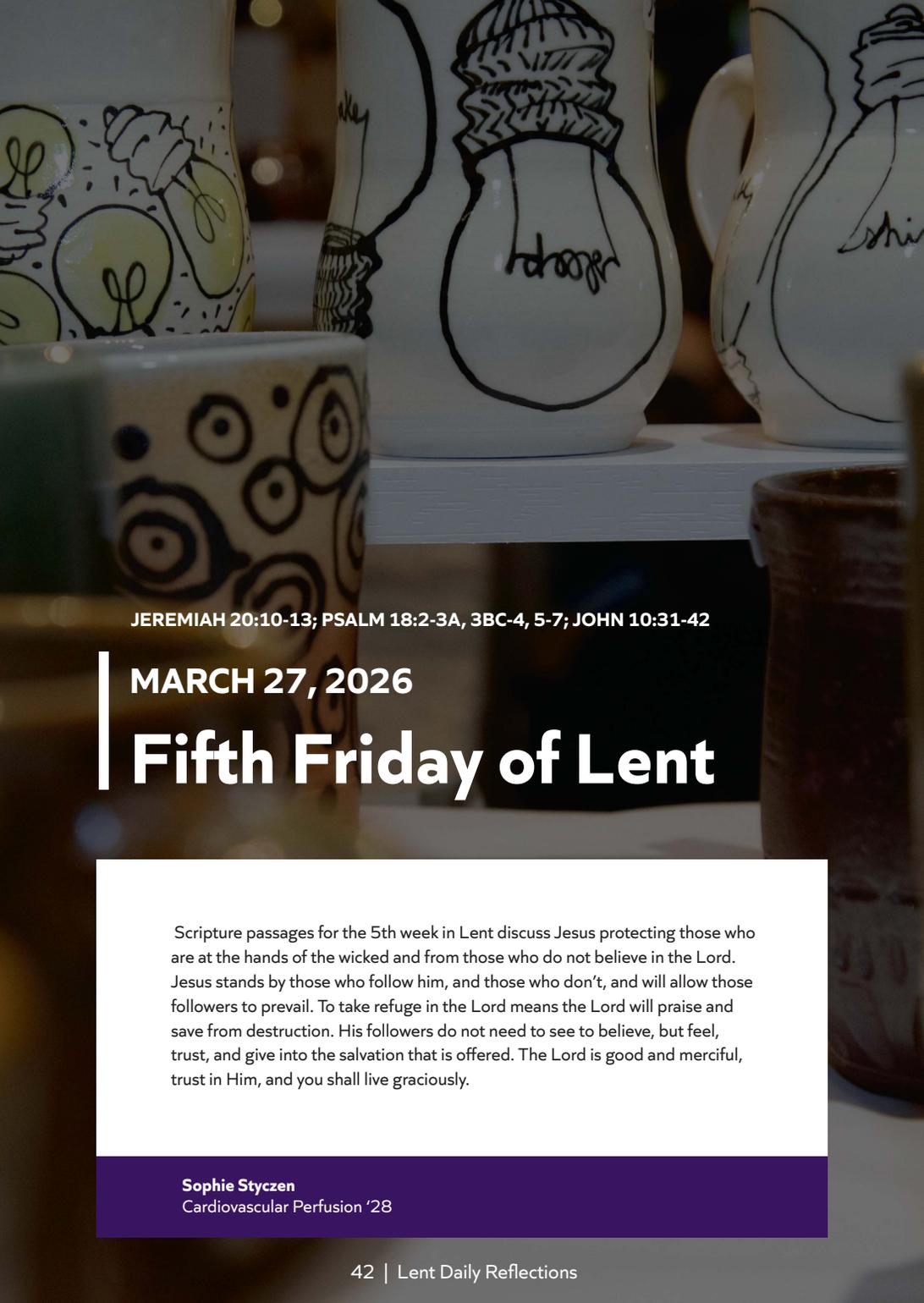
GENESIS 17:3-9; PSALM 105:4-9; JOHN 8:51-59

**MARCH 26, 2026**

# Fifth Thursday of Lent

In Psalm 105: 4-9 the verses talk about a call to God's people faithfully seeking Him. This is significant because these verses are talking about why it is important to seek out God and be faithful to Him. This is important to remember especially during Lent because we need to remember all that we have and why. We should remember that we need to not just get but also give back and be thankful for what we have. In the verses it emphasizes remembering God's promises and to remember the Lord's strength and presence. This is important to remember that you are not alone and to remember the things God told us. This is particularly good to remember during Lent. To remember that even when you are giving up something hard you are not alone and you are following your promises to God as He followed His to you.

**Claire Guthridge**  
**8th Grade** | Campus Laboratory School



JEREMIAH 20:10-13; PSALM 18:2-3A, 3BC-4, 5-7; JOHN 10:31-42

MARCH 27, 2026

# Fifth Friday of Lent

Scripture passages for the 5th week in Lent discuss Jesus protecting those who are at the hands of the wicked and from those who do not believe in the Lord. Jesus stands by those who follow him, and those who don't, and will allow those followers to prevail. To take refuge in the Lord means the Lord will praise and save from destruction. His followers do not need to see to believe, but feel, trust, and give into the salvation that is offered. The Lord is good and merciful, trust in Him, and you shall live graciously.

**Sophie Styczen**  
Cardiovascular Perfusion '28



EZEKIEL 37:21-28; JEREMIAH 31:10, 11-12ABCD, 13; JOHN 11:45-56

MARCH 28, 2026

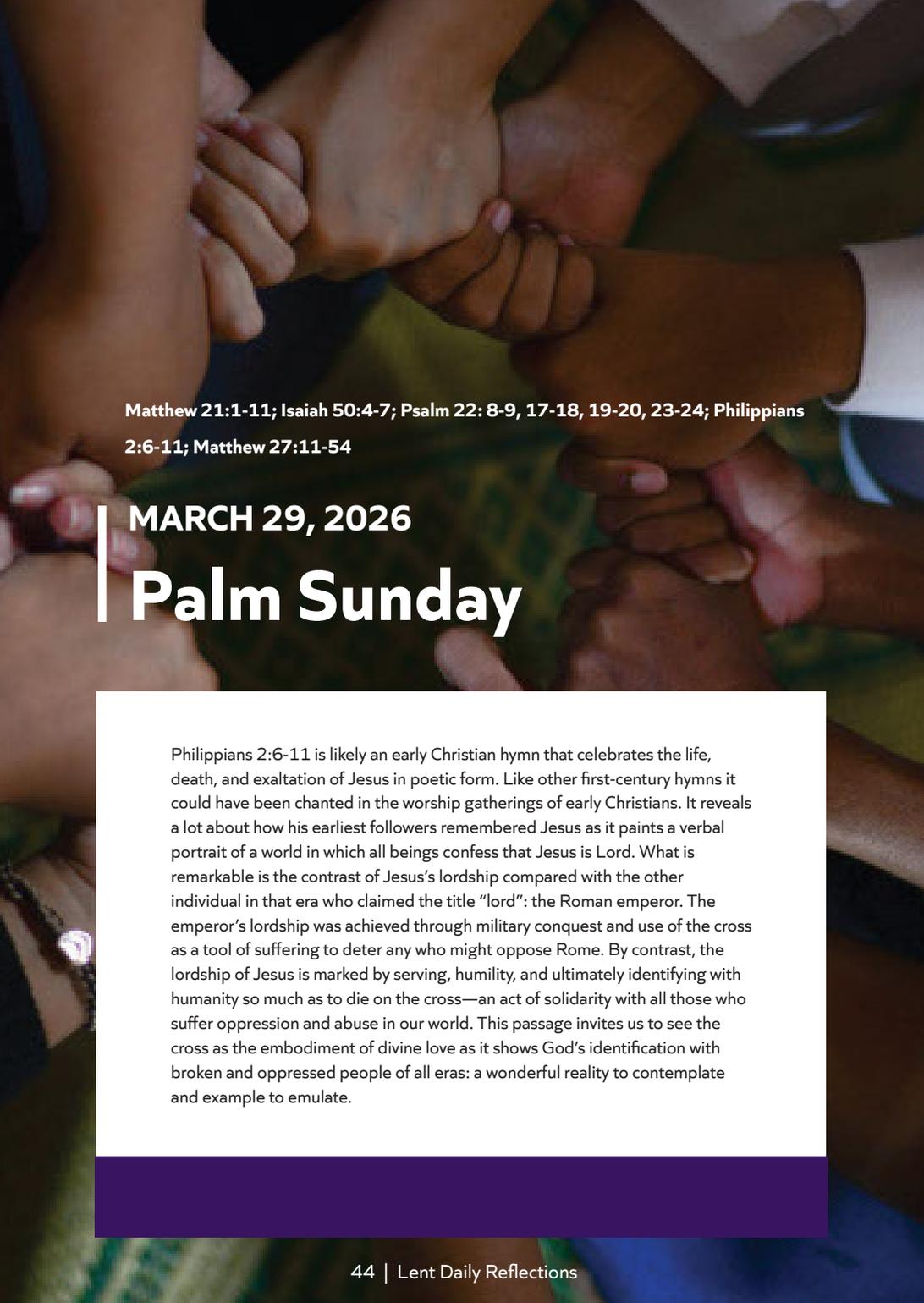
# Fifth Saturday of Lent

Ezekiel's prophecy was directed to the members of the Jewish community who had been uprooted from their homes in Israel and sent to live in Babylon. Biblical scholars estimate their captivity lasted for 70 years or more. Yes, generations grew up with parents and grandparents longing to be reunited with loved ones and to return to their homeland. We see similar images of displaced persons in the news every day. What words of comfort God speaks through Ezekiel!

"I will take the children of Israel from among the nations to which they have come and gather them from all sides to bring them back to their land. My sanctuary shall be set up among them forever. I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

As we enter into Holy Week, let us remember in particular all those who have been separated displaced by ceaseless wars, natural disasters, and hardened hearts.

**Julia Upton, RSM, MPH**  
Board of Trustees | Provost Emerita, St. John's University



Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-7; Psalm 22: 8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 27:11-54

MARCH 29, 2026

# Palm Sunday

Philippians 2:6-11 is likely an early Christian hymn that celebrates the life, death, and exaltation of Jesus in poetic form. Like other first-century hymns it could have been chanted in the worship gatherings of early Christians. It reveals a lot about how his earliest followers remembered Jesus as it paints a verbal portrait of a world in which all beings confess that Jesus is Lord. What is remarkable is the contrast of Jesus's lordship compared with the other individual in that era who claimed the title "lord": the Roman emperor. The emperor's lordship was achieved through military conquest and use of the cross as a tool of suffering to deter any who might oppose Rome. By contrast, the lordship of Jesus is marked by serving, humility, and ultimately identifying with humanity so much as to die on the cross—an act of solidarity with all those who suffer oppression and abuse in our world. This passage invites us to see the cross as the embodiment of divine love as it shows God's identification with broken and oppressed people of all eras: a wonderful reality to contemplate and example to emulate.

ISAIAH 42:1-7; PSALM 27: 1, 2, 3, 13-14; JOHN 12:1-11

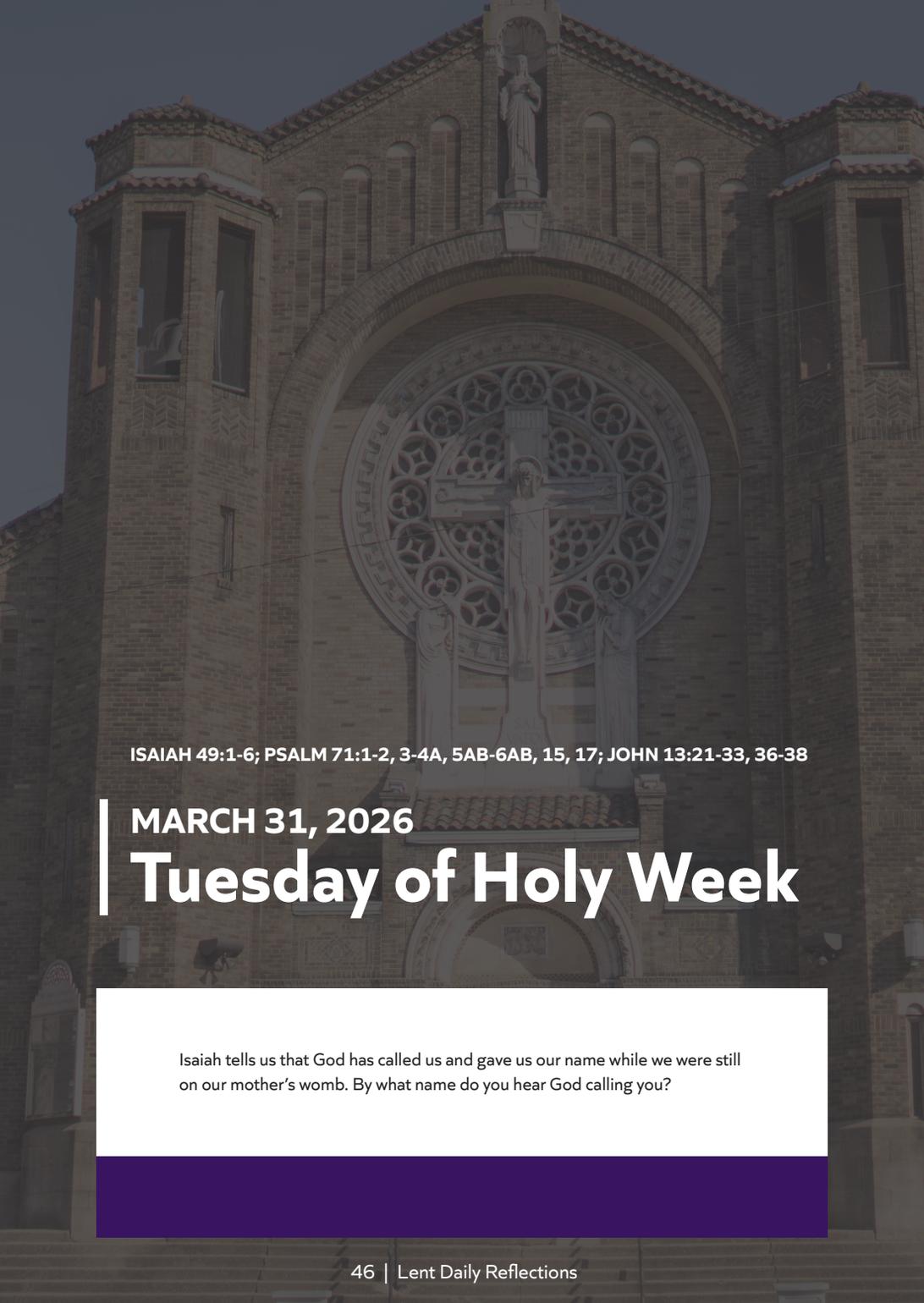
MARCH 30, 2026

# Monday of Holy Week

This passage in Isaiah makes me think about how the Lord has called us all to be his servants, not just to serve the Lord Himself, but to serve other people around us in honor of the Lord. As we put our trust in Him, He puts His trust in us to do good in this world. We shall not use our voices to harm other people, and we shall not disregard others just because they are broken. Instead, he calls on us to lift up all who are around us, especially those who are in desperate need of uplifting. The next part of this passage is especially important. It highlights that even though the Lord has created the Heavens and the Earth, and given life to all who are living or have lived, He still has so much faith in us all that he has called us to do these things, as long as we hold His hand every step of the way.

Each person depicted in the John passage represents an important theme in the Bible and in Christianity. Mary, sister to Lazarus, shows genuine love, devotion, and humility by pouring a very expensive bottle of perfume over Jesus's feet, then wiping his feet with her hair. This is an example to Christians to be extravagant with our love for Jesus. Judas represents betrayal and hypocrisy. He masked his greed by pretending to care for the poor. God calls followers of Jesus to reflect honestly on the motivations for our actions to benefit others. Lazarus represents Jesus's divine power. This miracle drew many to believe in Jesus as Messiah. However, the position of the chief priests was threatened by Jesus's power, showing their corruption.

**Mackenna Rankin**  
BS Biology, '27; MS Cardiovascular Perfusion, '28



ISAIAH 49:1-6; PSALM 71:1-2, 3-4A, 5AB-6AB, 15, 17; JOHN 13:21-33, 36-38

MARCH 31, 2026

# Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah tells us that God has called us and gave us our name while we were still on our mother's womb. By what name do you hear God calling you?

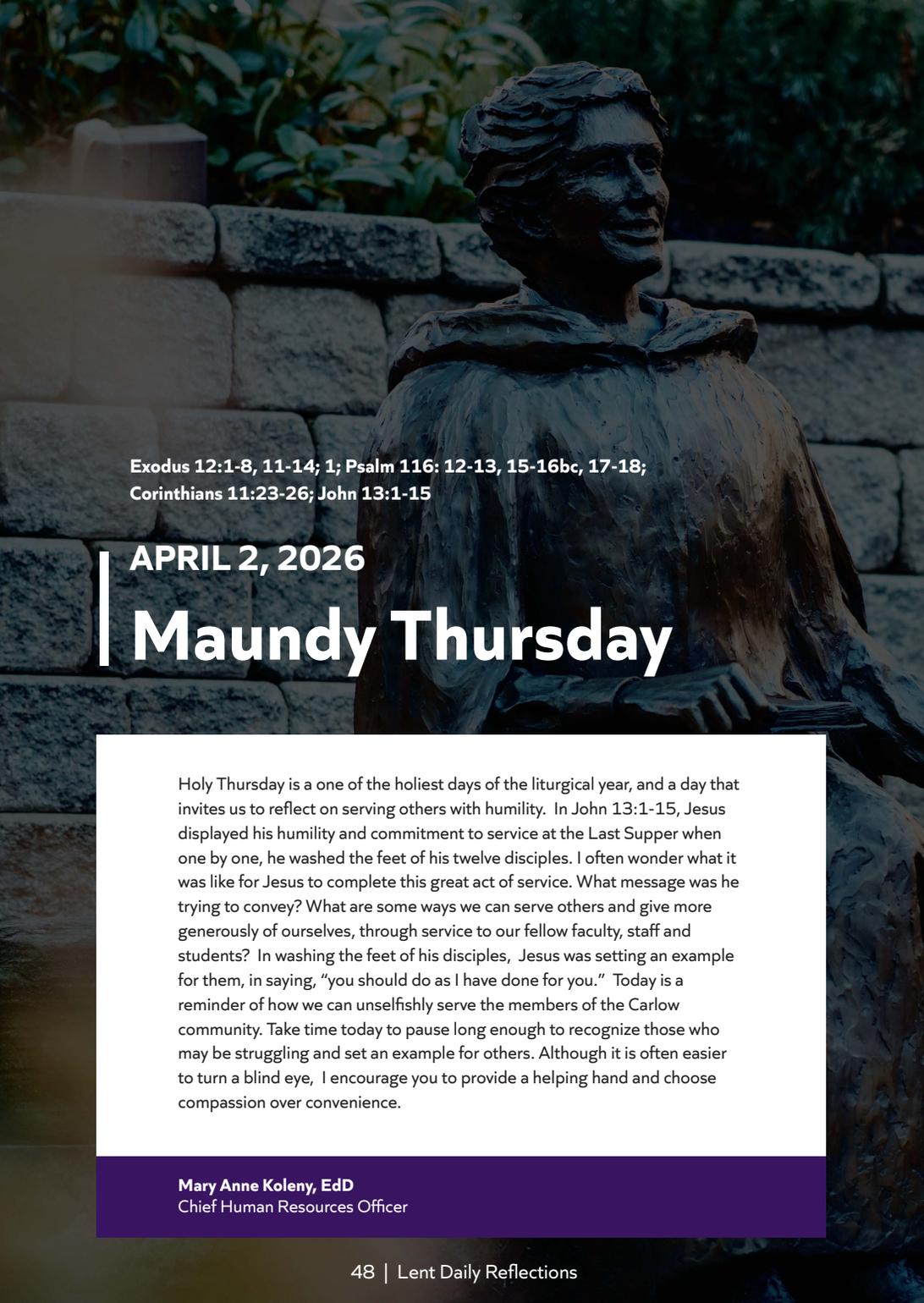
ISAIAH 50:4-9A; PSALM 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34; MATTHEW 26:14-25

APRIL 1, 2026

# Wednesday of Holy Week

Today's readings cause me to pause and reflect on the importance of outward faith and trust in the word of the Lord, even when faced with adversity for maintaining such a faith or temptation to stray away from God's word. One way to express our faith and trust in God's word is through acts of service to others. In other words, it is important to not just speak the word of the Lord, but live it through our actions. Mother Catherine McAuley once said, "[t]he corporal and spiritual works of Mercy which draw religious from a life of contemplation, so far from separating them from the love of God, unite them much more closely to him and render them more valuable in his holy service." In other words, it is important for us as the faithful to outwardly express our faith through service to others, which will bring us closer to God and his word

**Amy (Johnston) Allen, Esq., MBA**  
Adjunct Instructor, Criminal Law



Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1; Psalm 116: 12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18;  
Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15

APRIL 2, 2026

# Maundy Thursday

Holy Thursday is one of the holiest days of the liturgical year, and a day that invites us to reflect on serving others with humility. In John 13:1-15, Jesus displayed his humility and commitment to service at the Last Supper when one by one, he washed the feet of his twelve disciples. I often wonder what it was like for Jesus to complete this great act of service. What message was he trying to convey? What are some ways we can serve others and give more generously of ourselves, through service to our fellow faculty, staff and students? In washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus was setting an example for them, in saying, “you should do as I have done for you.” Today is a reminder of how we can unselfishly serve the members of the Carlow community. Take time today to pause long enough to recognize those who may be struggling and set an example for others. Although it is often easier to turn a blind eye, I encourage you to provide a helping hand and choose compassion over convenience.

**Mary Anne Koleny, EdD**  
Chief Human Resources Officer

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 31: 2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42

APRIL 3, 2026

# Good Friday

When reading these Bible verses, it is obvious that Jesus is experiencing fear, pain, betrayal, and loneliness. It's hard not to relate to Jesus in these feelings, as we have all felt them ourselves. Instead of dwelling on the negative emotions Jesus endured, it is essential to recognize that He has felt every emotion we face today. In every moment, Jesus is with you and me; nobody is ever suffering alone. Furthermore, in college life, it's easy to forget this. Life is constantly throwing things at you, and sometimes you don't know how you're going to get through it all. However, Jesus is with you always and knows how you are feeling. Just as Jesus carried the heavy cross, we, too, carry our own crosses when life starts to feel too heavy. It's important to remember, as college students, not to look at our weaknesses and struggles as a separation from Him, but the places where we encounter Jesus the most. On this Good Friday, as we think about Jesus carrying His cross, maybe we can identify our own. We can start by asking ourselves what we are struggling with and how we can find God in those struggles. Just because Lent is almost over doesn't mean we have to stop working on our relationship with Jesus. Remember, even after this Lenten season, God is always with us, no matter the circumstance, and it is essential to seek out His unconditional love and support, always.

**Kennedy Gunn**  
Healthcare Management, '27

GENESIS 22:1-18; ROMANS 6:3-11; MATTHEW 28:1-10

APRIL 4, 2026

# Holy Saturday

What marvelous resurrection scene did the guards miss with their backs to the tomb? They were so certain of their own understanding of Jesus (a false prophet, dead) and so concerned with rebuffing others' views of him (don't let them fake a resurrection!) that they lost track of Jesus himself (risen, radiant, inviting). Only once the angel rolled back the stone did they realize they had been guarding an empty grave.

Have I done the same? Have I spent so much time protecting my view of Jesus (aligned with my politics, my comfort, my values) and attacking views that threaten it (anything unfamiliar, unexpected, challenging) that I've stopped focusing on Jesus himself (too real for "every view of him is valid," but also too real to be fully encompassed by any)?

This Easter, as at the first Easter, Jesus is on the move. He invites us to where he can reveal more clearly who he is. Do I remain behind, guarding the Jesus I expect him to be, protecting an empty tomb? Or do I risk following, receptive to Jesus as he is?

**Stephen R. Calme, PhD**  
Assistant Professor of Theology

Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Psalm 118: 1-2, 16-17, 22-23; 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8; Luke 24:13-35

APRIL 5, 2026

# Easter Sunday



Peter proclaims in Acts that God shows no partiality, but in every nation, whoever fears Him and does what is right is acceptable. The Resurrection is not a reward reserved for the perfect; it is mercy extended to sinners like the centurion Cornelius, like the disciples who fled, like us. Jesus forgives even those who put Him to death, and He commissions trembling failures to be His witnesses. This is the heart of Easter: God's mercy triumphs over every barrier we erect.

Psalm 118 sings it plainly: "His mercy endures forever." The stone rejected: crucified, buried, mocked, has become the cornerstone. What looked like defeat was mercy's masterpiece. The right hand of the Lord is lifted not in wrath but in rescue; death could not hold Him, and therefore it cannot hold us.

Paul urges us to clear out the old leaven of malice and wickedness and celebrate with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. The old leaven is the lie that we must earn mercy. Christ our Passover has already been sacrificed; the feast is ready. Mercy is not something we achieve; it is the meal set before prodigals who simply come home.

On the Emmaus road, two disheartened disciples walk with a Stranger who opens the Scriptures and breaks the bread. Only then do their eyes see: the Crucified is the Living One. At Carlow University, rooted in the Mercy tradition of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy, we know this story intimately. Mercy walks our campus hallways, sits in our classrooms, and meets us in the Grace Library and St. Agnes Chapel when we feel most lost or doubtful. The Risen Lord is still mercifully near, especially to the slow, the weary student, the questioning heart, and the broken spirit.

This Easter, let us walk slower, hearts burning, eyes open. Christ is risen, and because He is merciful, Carlow is a place where resurrection keeps happening. Alleluia.

**Fr. Nicholas Clinton Chaplain to the Carlow Community |**  
Diocese of Pittsburgh



# Acknowledgments

These are the members of our community who generously contributed their prayers and reflections for the completion of this 20th Annual Lenten Reflection Journal. Please keep them in your prayers as we take this Lenten journey together.

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*Now is the Acceptable Time* was created for the Carlow University Community by The Center for Mercy Heritage and Service, Office of Campus Ministry, and the Marketing and Communications Department. You may access the daily reflections online at:

**[www.carlow.edu/campusministry](http://www.carlow.edu/campusministry)**

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