

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2015

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT; THIRD SCRUTINY OF THE ELECT

The voice of the Lord is our escape

Each time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we ask God to "Deliver us from evil." Although we don't think about it, this is technically an exorcism: an invocation against the spirit of evil in the world. The three Scrutinies of the Elect are not simply opportunities for a long, searching examination of the heart in preparation for Easter. The Scrutinies are also meant to strengthen those who are new in faith against the lure of sin, described as "a horror" and "a shackle." Like Lazarus, we all need to "come out!" of that darkness and into saving grace.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Year A: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45 (34).* "So Jesus said to them, 'Untie him and let him go.'"

MONDAY, MARCH 23

FEAST OF TURIBIUS OF MOGROVEJO, BISHOP

Let's get a move on!

"Turibius the Tireless" could be the nickname of today's saint. As a Spanish missionary and later bishop in 16th-century colonial Peru, he traversed a 176,000-square-mile diocese—three times—to attend to those in his charge. His favorite saying is one we do well to keep in mind: "Time is not our own, and we must give a strict account of it." Keep a simple time log for a week, and you'll learn something about your priorities. You might be surprised by how much time is frittered away. Not that down-time is all bad, mind you—relaxing and recreating are also part of God's plan. But keep in mind that time is a nonrenewable resource. How will you spend your precious allotment?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Deuteronomy 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11 (251).* "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

TUESDAY, MARCH 24 LENTEN WEEKDAY

Spoken for

"Each one of you has to be God's microphone. Each one of you has to be a messenger, a prophet." These fateful words of Archbishop Oscar Romero, martyred this day in 1980, speak of what it means to be a person of faith. Faith must be lived out. Romero advocated for the rights and dignity of those who were materially poor. He preached the gospel by how he lived. His life broadcast the Good News, calling others to lives of holiness and humility. Your life can speak volumes, too; it's simply a matter of letting God make of you a microphone.

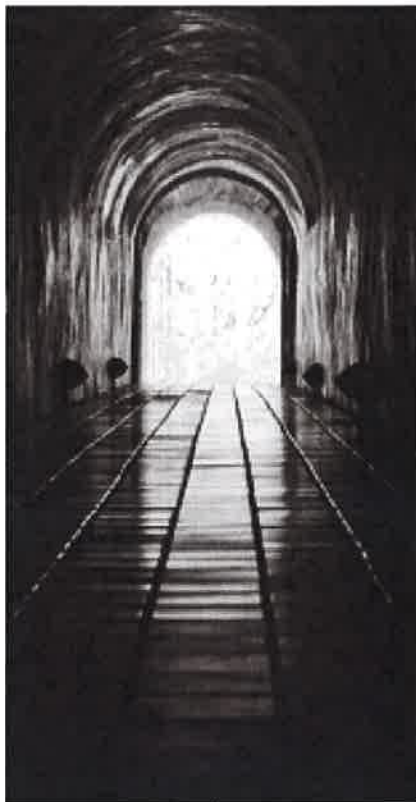
TODAY'S READINGS: *Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30 (252).* "The one who sent me is with me."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

That's the spirit

"Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with you." Those familiar and beloved words are the core of today's celebration. The Annunciation is a favorite subject of artists from Da Vinci to Fra



Angelico to Jan van Eyck and others, all trying to capture what it means to be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit: the meeting of God and the ordinary human person. The paintings show a range of emotions in Mary, what any of us would feel when God asks something of us: fear, uncertainty, humble acceptance. With or without angels, God is daily entrusting the mission of Christ to your hands. How do you usually respond? What about today?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38 (545).* "How can this be?"

THURSDAY, MARCH 26 LENTEN WEEKDAY

What's beyond the rainbow?

The books of the Old Testament present a number of covenants between God and the patriarchs—Abraham, Moses, and David all have their moment. But perhaps most interesting is the first covenant God makes, in the story of the flood, because that one is with every living creature, a covenant, says God, "between me and the earth." The rainbow covenant promised protection against destruction by flood. Have we made a similar covenant with the earth, promising not to destroy through polluting, deforesting, and overdeveloping? We survived the flood thanks to God's covenant.

The next covenant depends on us.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59 (254).* "Whoever keeps my word will never see death."

FRIDAY, MARCH 27 LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

It's not too late

So maybe this has been the richest, most faithful, most spiritually rewarding Lent of your life. Or maybe your early resolutions to pray more, eat less, be kind all fell apart like a house of cards the day after Ash Wednesday. Be not afraid: There's still time to get your spiritual act together and make this a Lent to remember. Spiritual renewal is not about attaining perfection, but about putting yourself in the hands of grace. Confession is a place to begin. Ask for what you need in prayer. Trust in God, not yourself. God is a much better bet!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42 (255).* "The Lord is with me, like a mighty champion."

SATURDAY, MARCH 28 LENTEN WEEKDAY

"They're into the final turn"

Take a deep breath—with Palm Sunday on the way and Holy Week ahead, you're in the home stretch to Easter. Maybe your life this Lent resembled a road race, complete with bumps and dents and a few hairpin turns. That's all behind you now. Take a deep breath today, let it all go, and look toward the horizon of hope. That is what Easter is all about. It pulls us forward toward what we think is the finish line, only to discover when the checkered flag comes down that we were winners all along!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56 (256).* "Now the Passover of the Jews was near."



Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

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CatholicMom.com Gospel Activities - John 12:20-33

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L H Q D C E Y J V J Y Y E Q I K V S M P
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Word Bank

Amen, Andrew, Bethsaida, Earth, Father, Galilee, Glorified, Greeks, Heaven, Honor, Jesus, Judgment, Life, Lifted, Passover, Philip, Ruler, Thunder, Troubled, Wheat