

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

One of the traditional spiritual practices during Lent is prayer - to pray more attentively, devoutly and faithfully. Prayer is a hunger and a thirst - a longing, an yearning, an impelling desire - for God and God's ways. Our desire for prayer is itself a gift of God. St. Catherine of Siena reminds us that our holy desire for prayer itself is a continual prayer. To pray is to open ourselves to the Father so that our entire life - from the seeking of daily bread to the transformation of the world - is filled with God's love.

St. Augustine tells us that prayerfulness, left alone, cannot last forever. Prayerfulness needs to be often re-energized through new acts of prayer. So we use various types of prayer to attain and maintain this union with our Triune God, to capture and maintain a personal and intimate encounter with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. St. Paul advises us, "At every opportunity, pray in the Spirit, using prayers and petitions of every sort. Pray constantly and attentively for all God's people." (Ephesians 6:18)

"Prayer is one of the ways that God chose to share his infinite power with us", said Blaise Pascal, the French Mathematician. Just as God shares his power with us by making us "thinking persons", He shares His power with us by making us "praying persons." Not everyone can impact human affairs by thought. But everyone, even someone with a low I.Q. can do so by prayer. God has created us to be more than mere spectators of His creative power. He has created us to share in His creative power, created us in his "image and likeness." Asking God is an act of trust that God has power over our lives - that God loves us so much that we can trust him with our lives - our lives' concerns, needs, etc. Prayer is opening our hearts and minds to God, being before God with open arms - to receive or to give, to change or be changed, to be filled or go away empty.

Let us choose to be more attentive, devout and faithful in prayer during Lent. If you have already a habit of praying, let it become more reflective. If you have not been praying, it is a good time to begin. When you first awaken or before drifting off to sleep, quiet your mind, lift up your heart in prayer, and listen to the voice of the Lord. Begin the day by simply pausing when you get up and taking a slow, deep breath, and recalling what you have to do this day, and asking for grace to do it faithfully and well. May this season of Lent enable you to pray more attentively, devoutly and faithfully.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Second Week of Lent

March 2 - 7, 2026

To pray is to open ourselves to the Father
so that our entire life from the seeking of daily bread
to the transformation of the world, is filled with God's will and purpose.

March 2 – Monday, Second Week of Lent

Find serenity within by accepting God's plan and purpose for you.

Daniel 9:4-10

Daniel made a corporate act of contrition because the whole nation had broken the covenant. He called on the Mercy of an “awesome God who keeps his merciful covenant.” God is faithful to Himself and to his covenant even when His people are unfaithful. Our call is to be godlike.

Be faithful even when others are not faithful. Let not your faithfulness depend on other's faithfulness or the lack of it.

Psalm 79

**Lord, do not deal with us as our sins deserve,
May your compassion quickly come to us!
Deliver us and pardon our sins,
For your name's sake.**

Luke 6:36-38

Jesus taught his disciples to be compassionate. He called them and now, he calls us to live a very high standard of life: “Be Compassionate as the father is compassionate.” This is the standard for the disciples: they must do more and be more than the pagans; they must do that “extra thing.” What special grace is there in doing what even the ungodly may do, Jesus asked?

How much better are you than the ordinary person who has not been enlightened, awakened, educated, blessed, spirited, baptized and anointed?

Do not judge, Jesus said. It is not our neighbor that we must judge. It is not our neighbor with whom we must compare ourselves. It is with God and His ways and that is the challenge. The rationale, the motivation for all these is that they make us “godlike” people. We reflect God’s nature - in God’s image we are made. God sends His rain on the just and the unjust; God is kind to the one who is kind and kind to the one who is unkind; God embraces the saint and the sinner as well.

We are called to love as we have been loved., to forgive as we have been forgiven, to give as we have been given, to bless as we have been blessed.....

Saint of the Day, March 2 - St. Agnes of Bohemia and 10 other saints are remembered this day.

Agnes of Bohemia, also known as Agnes of Prague was born on June 20, 1211. She was the daughter of Queen Constance and King Ottokar I of Bohemia. She was betrothed to the Duke of Silesia, who died three years later. As she grew up, she decided she wanted to enter the religious life.

After declining marriages to King Henry VII of Germany and King Henry III of England, Agnes was faced with a proposal from Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor. She appealed to Pope Gregory IX for help. The pope was persuasive; Frederick magnanimously said that he could not be offended if Agnes preferred the King of Heaven to him.

After Agnes built a hospital for the poor and a residence for the friars, she financed the construction of a Poor Clare monastery in Prague. In 1236, she and seven other noblewomen entered this monastery. Saint Clare sent five sisters from San Damiano to join them and wrote Agnes four letters advising her on the beauty of her vocation and her duties as abbess.

Agnes became known for prayer, obedience and mortification. Papal pressure forced her to accept her election as abbess, nevertheless, the title she preferred was “senior sister.” Her position did not prevent her from cooking for the other sisters and mending the clothes of lepers. The sisters found her kind but very strict regarding the observance of poverty; she declined her royal brother’s offer to set up an endowment for the monastery. Agnes lived out her life in the cloister, leading the monastery as abbess, until her death on March 2, 1282.

March 3 – Tuesday, Second Week of Lent

Find serenity by being patient with self and others.

Isaiah 1:10, 16-20

The prophet calls his people to listen to God's word and cleanse themselves. He calls them to give up evil ways and learn to do good. Stay focused on living life of justice and the care of the widows, orphans and the marginalized in your community.

Listen to the Lord's call: "come now, let us set things right!" What an amazing and humbling invitation: "let us set things right!"

Psalm 50

**He that offers praise as a sacrifice glorifies me;
And to him that goes the right way,
I will show the salvation of God.**

Mathew 23:1-12

Jesus cautions us about the ways of the scribes and the Pharisees and offers us new challenges and new ways of being faithful to God's call. Beware of the ways of the scribes and Pharisees. They teach ideals which they do not practice. Their practices are without spirit, meant to make an impression on people. They look for applause, for praise, position, etc.

Welcome the Gospel values and be faithful. But be cautious about following the ways of those who teach and preach. Be discerning about whom you choose to follow.

The disciple of Jesus must follow the example of the Master and be ready to serve. The greatness of a disciple lies in giving himself in service. Greatness comes from being humble in service and not in occupying places of honor.

Be humble in your ways! And be ready to serve following the example of the Master. Let the service be an expression of your love for God and God's people.

Saint of the day, March 3 - St. Katharine Drexel and 19 other saints are remembered his day.

Katherine was born in Pennsylvania in 1858. Her parents were wealthy, but prayerful and generous to charitable causes. The family traveled throughout the United States and Katherine witnessed the plight of the American Indian and the African American communities. After the death of their father, Katherine and her two sisters traveled to Europe. While they were in Rome, Katherine requested an audience with Pope Leo XIII to ask him to send missionaries to

the American Indians in the western United States. In response, Pope Leo suggested that Katherine herself become a missionary.

Katherine had already fallen in love with Christ and felt a strong urge to serve him. She professed her vows in 1891 and took the name of Mother Katherine. She began the religious order, Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1915, she founded Xavier University in New Orleans, the first Catholic university for African Americans. By the time of her death in 1955, she established 63 schools and 50 missions. Mother Katherine was canonized a saint by Pope John Paul in 2000, and she is the patron saint of racial justice and philanthropists. She is the second USA born person to be canonized a saint.

March 4 – Wednesday, Second Week of Lent

**Find serenity by trusting that God will provide strength
for carrying your burdens.**

Jeremiah 18:18-20

Men of Judah and Jerusalem began to plot against Jeremiah. They began to carefully note every word that he spoke. Jeremiah turned to God and expressed his frustrations. The people he had prayed for have become his adversaries and have turn against him. Jeremiah wondered: “must good be paid with evil”!!!

Be gracious! Do good to all, even to those who are not good to you!

Psalm 31

**You will free me from the snare they set for me,
for you are my refuge.
Into your hands I commend my spirit;
You will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.**

Mathew 20:17-28

Jesus said to the disciples that he was on his way to Jerusalem and that he would be judged, flogged, and crucified. But on the third day he would rise again. Mathew tells us, at this point, that the mother of the sons of Zebedee requested Jesus to let her two sons have important positions in the Kingdom.

Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others! Look beyond your own needs and concerns. Look out for opportunity to love and serve and not for prestige and positions of importance.

Jesus assured them a share in the cup he was going to drink. But important positions come from the Father. And important positions and greatness in the kingdom result from humble service to others in need. Jesus told them that he came to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

Be prepared to drink the “cup” that Jesus offers – the cup of suffering and salvation and the wine of compassion and forgiving and healing love. Be gracious! Learn to surrender yourself in service. Greatness in the kingdom comes from total giving in love and humble service to others in need.

Saint of the Day, March 4 - St. Casimir and 11 other saints are remembered this day.

Casimir, the second son of Casimir III, King of Poland, was born on October 3, 1458. From the custody of a very virtuous mother, Elizabeth of Austria, he passed to the guardianship of a devoted master, the learned and pious John Dugloss. As a teenager, Casimir lived a highly disciplined, even severe life, sleeping on the ground, spending a great part of the night in prayer and dedicating himself to lifelong celibacy.

When nobles in Hungary became dissatisfied with their king, they prevailed upon Casimir’s father, the king of Poland, to send his son to take over the country. Casimir obeyed his father, as many young men over the centuries have obeyed their governments. The army he was supposed to lead was clearly outnumbered by the “enemy”; some of his troops were deserting because they were not paid. At the advice of his officers, Casimir decided to return home.

His father was irked at the failure of his plans and confined his 15-year-old son for three months. He made up his mind never again to become involved in the wars of his day, and no amount of persuasion could change his mind. He returned to prayer and study, maintaining his decision to remain celibate even under pressure to marry the emperor’s daughter.

He had a great devotion to the Passion of Our Lord, which moved him to charity to the poor and afflicted. His love for the Blessed mother is expressed in a long and beautiful hymn, familiar to us in English as Daily, Daily, Sing to Mary.

He reigned briefly as king of Poland during his father’s absence. He died of lung trouble at the age of 25 on March 4, 1484 while visiting Lithuania, of which he was also Grand Duke. He was buried in Vilnius, Lithuania.

March 5 – Thursday, Second Week of Lent

Silence, solitude, stillness and serenity make us ready for a meeting with God.

Jeremiah 17:5-10

The prophet tells us that only God is worthy of our “absolute trust”. Total trust in human beings could bring us disappointment. Even in difficult times God is with us, every step of the way - God’s presence is our Grace and our strength.

Psalm 1

**Happy the person who delights in the law of the Lord
and meditates on his law day and night.
He is like a tree planted near running water,
that yields its fruit in due season.....**

Luke 16:19-31

This excerpt brings us the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. To the surprise of his listeners, Jesus pictured “torment” in eternal life for the rich man who was caught up in the glory of material wealth and “consolation” in eternal life for the poor man, Lazarus who begged for basic necessities of life.

Riches are not necessarily a sign of God’s blessings and poverty is not necessarily a sign of the absence of God’s blessings.

Journey through life, even a simple journey down the street, requires basic trust. Without this trust, we do not grow as human beings. Built into the very nature of life is the need to trust. We need to trust just to have our basic needs fulfilled. If we are to live and find fulfillment, we must place our lives in something outside of and even beyond ourselves.

In this “essential” trusting, we are reminded that we must be “prudent” and we must discern what and whom we will trust.

We are also reminded that “absolute, abiding, deep” trust belongs to God and God alone. Only God is worthy of such total trust. Only God is worthy of our surrender. The responsorial psalm of today says: “happy are those who trust in the Lord”.

Saint of the Day, March 5 - St. John Joseph of the Cross and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

Saint John Joseph of the Cross was born Carlo Gaetano Calosirto on August 15, 1654 on the island of Ischia off the coast of Naples. He entered the Order of Friars Minor in Naples before he turned sixteen and assumed the religious name of "John Joseph of the Cross". He was the first Italian to follow the reform movement of Saint Peter of Alcantara. In 1674 he was sent to found a monastery for the order at Afilia in Piedmont and assisted in the actual construction itself. He was ordained to the priesthood, much against his will.

In 1702 the Italian houses were no longer dependent on the Spanish houses but were formed into a separate province. He was then appointed as the Vicar Provincial of the Alcantarine Reform in the Italian peninsula. As the superior he ordered that no beggar should be dismissed from the gate without some form of relief - in times of need he devoted to their necessities his own portions and even that of the house he lived at. When he trekked across the mainland as the provincial, he would not make himself known at the inns where he lodged because he disliked distinction and did not believe such should be paid to him. As the superior, he performed the lowliest tasks. He died on March 5, 1739. He was beatified in 1789 and canonized in 1839.

March 6 - Friday, Second Week of Lent

**Serenity is not freedom from the storm,
but peace in the middle of the storm.**

Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28

Joseph was the best loved of his father's sons. His brothers became jealous and plotted to kill him. God had his plan, and he came to save Joseph and called him to be an important person in the history of salvation.

The stone which the builders rejected became the corner stone.....What was rejected by men became vital for salvation.

Jealousy is a betrayal of our solidarity with our brothers and sisters. Jealousy and envy destroy our communion, our fellowship, our common "sonship". Acceptance and affirmation of each other and each other's gifts build our communion and fellowship with one another. We are members of one family with God as our loving and gracious Father. We are called to rejoice in the many gifts of God that we recognize in ourselves as well as in others.

Psalm 105

**Glory in God's holy name; rejoice O heart that seek the Lord!
Look to the Lord in his strength; seek to serve him constantly.**

Mathew 21:33-43, 45-46

This Parable of the tenant farmers teaches us many things: that we are trusted stewards; that we are trusted to cultivate and tenderly care for God's gifts; that our God has graciously gifted us with all that is necessary for our life and mission; that our God is patient and compassionate and that abuse of our gifts and talents brings us disaster.

Reflect on being good, faithful and trusted stewards of God's gifts.

Reflect on how you have been appreciating and cultivating your gifts.

Reflect on the "Graciousness" of God. Reflect on your own need to be gracious in your ways.

Saint of the day, March 6 - St. Colette and 20 other saints are remembered this day

St. Colette was born Nicole Boellet (or Boylet) in the village of Corbie, in France, on January 13, 1381 to Robert Boellet, a poor carpenter at the noted Benedictine Abbey of Corbie, and to his wife, Marguerite Moyon. Her parents had grown old without having children, before praying to Saint Nicholas for help in having a child. Their prayers were answered when, at the age of 60, Marguerite gave birth to a daughter. Out of gratitude, they named the baby after the saint to whom they credited the miracle of her birth. She was affectionately called Nicolette by her parents, which soon came to be shorted to Colette, by which name she is known.

After her parents died in 1399, Colette joined the Beguines (lay religious orders that were active in Northern Europe in 12-16 centuries) but found their manner of life unchallenging. Joining a Benedictine order as a lay sister, she again became dissatisfied. In September 1402, Colette received the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis and became a hermit under the direction of the Abbot of Corbie, living near the abbey church. After four years of following this ascetic way of life, through several dreams and visions, she came to believe that she was being called to reform the Franciscan Second Order and to return it to its original Franciscan ideals of absolute poverty and austerity.

In October 1406, she turned to the Antipope Benedict XIII of Avignon who was recognized in France as the rightful pope. Benedict received her in southern France and allowed her to transfer to the Order of Poor Clares. Additionally, he empowered her through several papal

bulls, issued between 1406 and 1412, to found new monasteries and to complete the reform of the Order. During her lifetime 18 monasteries of her reform were founded. For the monasteries which followed her reform, she prescribed extreme poverty, going barefoot, and the observance of perpetual fasting and abstinence. She died on March 6, 1447 and was canonized in 1807.

March 7 – Saturday, Second Week of Lent

Serenity is being still with a listening heart and an open mind.

Micah 7:14-15, 18-20

Micah denounces Israel's sins, especially the social crimes. He says that God will, again, have compassion and remove the guilt of his people. God will cast all sins into the depths of the sea.

Leave your sinfulness behind and move on with confidence in God's forgiving and healing love.

Psalm 103

**Bless the Lord O my soul!
And all my being, bless his holy name.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far does he put our transgressions from us.**

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

We read one of the most familiar stories of the Gospel, the parable of the prodigal son. This is a story of running away from home, turning around in repentance, and being embraced by forgiving love. We meet a father who lets his son make his own choices and regretfully let him go his way and welcomes him back, without conditions, on his return.

We meet a son who rejects the love of the family and chooses to abandon everything that the family represented for him, encountering personal failures and eventually turning around in repentance and seeking forgiveness and healing.

We meet another son who fails to understand the heart of his father and refuses to forgive and accept his repentant brother.

This is a very moving and inspiring and challenging story. This story is a “Gospel” in itself. It is the Gospel, the good news of God’s forgiving, healing, unconditional, steadfast and all-embracing love.

Learn to recognize your own failures and sinfulness and return home to God! Learn to forgive your brother from the heart! Learn to trust in the unconditional, forgiving, all-embracing love of God in Jesus.

Saint of the day, March 7 - Saints Perpetua and Felicity and 10 other saints are remembered this day.

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity were Christian martyrs who lived during the early persecution of the Church in Africa by the Emperor Severus. With details concerning the lives of many early martyrs unclear and often based on legend, we are fortunate to have the actual record of the courage of Perpetua and Felicity from the hand of Perpetua herself, her teacher Saturus, and others who knew them. This account, known as "The Passion of St. Perpetua, St. Felicitas, and their Companions," was so popular in the early centuries that it was read during liturgies.

In the year 203, Vivia Perpetua, a well-educated noblewoman, made the decision to follow the path of her mother and become a Christian, although she knew it could mean her death during the persecutions ordered by the Emperor Severus. Perpetua’s mother was a Christian and her father a pagan. He continually pleaded with her to deny her faith. She refused and was imprisoned at age 22.

Despite threats of persecution and death, Perpetua, Felicity—a slave woman and expectant mother—and three companions, Revocatus, Secundulus and Saturninus, refused to renounce their Christian faith. For their unwillingness, all were sent to the public games in the amphitheater. There Perpetua and Felicity were beheaded, and the others killed by beasts.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**When prayer is a struggle, do not worry about the prayers that you cannot pray.
You yourself are a prayer to God at that moment.
All that is within you cries out to Him.**