

Second Week of Lent: Reflections

Monday, March 2, 2015

Mercy and Forgiveness

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” Again in today’s Gospel we see that we are to act as God acts. We are not to show the kind of mercy that a secular judge would. Our model is the One to whom the reading from Daniel acclaims “mercy and forgiveness” belong. Make a mental note this week whenever you are inclined to judge another. Remind yourself of this Gospel passage and seek to dispel the judgment. As you continue this practice, you may find yourself becoming more merciful. *Today’s Readings: Daniel 9:4b –10; Psalm 79:8, 9, 11 and 13 (103:10a); Luke 6:36 – 38.*

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

St. Katharine Drexel, Virgin

Katharine Drexel (1858 –1955), the patroness of racial justice, was brought up in an upper-class family that opened their home to the poor. As a young woman interested in the needs of Native Americans, she was encouraged by her bishop and Pope Leo XIII to form a missionary order of nuns. The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament established twelve schools for Native Americans and fifty for African Americans, among them the teachers’ college that became Xavier University of Louisiana. *Today’s Readings: Isaiah 1:10, 16 – 20; Psalm 50:8 – 9, 16bc –17, 21 and 23 (23b); Matthew 23:1–12.*

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

St. Casimir

St. Casimir (1458 –1483) is the patron of Poland and Lithuania. This son of the king of Poland was called “the Peacemaker” and “Defender of the Poor” during his young life. Uninterested in life as a prince, he lived modestly, devoting much of his day to prayer. He gave away much of his wealth to the poor and also interceded on their behalf with his father. Casimir seemed to understand the phrase in today’s Gospel, “whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant.” *Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 18:18 – 20; Psalm 31:5 – 6, 14, 15–16 (17b); Matthew 20:17– 28.*

Thursday, March 5, 2015

Dependence on God

Upon hearing the story of Lazarus and the rich man that Jesus tells in today’s Gospel, we might initially think that the main focus is on compassion for the poor. While that is part of the story, there is more to it. The rich man has ignored the beggar’s cries, but he also has ignored God until he is left suffering in hell. Had the rich man depended on God while alive, he would have paid attention to the poor man. How does your life suffer when you refuse to bring God into it? *Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 17:5 –10; Psalm 1:1– 2, 3, 4 and 6 (40:5a); Luke 16:19 – 31.*

Friday, March 6, 2015

Coworkers in the Vineyard

In today’s parable, we may be overwhelmed that the wicked tenants killed the servants and then the landowner’s son; however, this parable is about more than murderous tenants. As disciples, we have been called to labor in the Lord’s vineyard. As the 2005 US bishops’ document states, “The Risen Lord calls everyone to labor in his vineyard, that is, in a world that must be transformed in view of the final coming of the Reign of God” (p. 1). Each of us must be mindful to do God’s work in the world. *Today’s Readings: Genesis 37:3 – 4, 12 –13a, 17b – 28a; Psalm 105:16 –17, 18 –19, 20 – 21 (5a); Matthew 21:33 – 43, 45 – 46.*

Saturday, March 7, 2015

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs

Perpetua, a mother of an infant son and chronicler of the persecution of Christians, and Felicity, a slave woman and expectant mother, were both killed by beasts in a public arena with a crowd watching. These holy women, who died around the year 203, heeded the Lord’s call and stood firm in the faith. That they would be killed for their faith did not deter their resolve to live as Christians. What challenges do you face as a Christian? *Today’s Readings: Micah 7:14 –15, 18 – 20; Psalm 103:1– 2, 3 – 4, 9 –10, 11–12 (8a); Luke 15:1– 3, 11– 32.*

Prayer for Increased Faith

Lord our God, because Abraham acted in faith and obedience you blessed him abundantly with descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore. Stir our faith in you, so that we will not shirk when obedience to your call is difficult. May we be transformed through faith, and be willing to acclaim your glory and majesty, even when we suffer trials and it seems you are putting us to the test. We ask this through our Lord