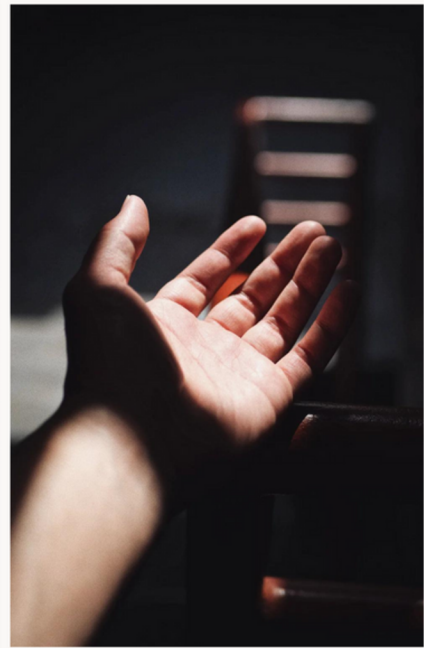
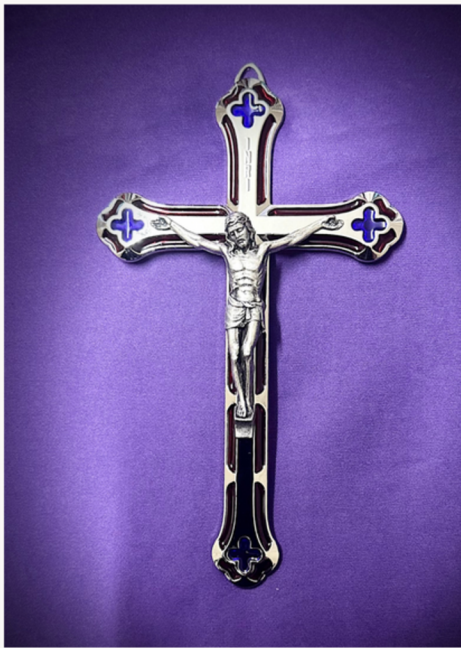


LENT 2025



P R A Y E R + F A S T + G I V E +

RESOURCES FOR PARISHES,
SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

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POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR LENT 2025

“Let us journey together in hope”:

25th February 2025

Dear brothers and sisters,

We begin our annual pilgrimage of Lent in faith and hope with the penitential rite of the imposition of ashes. The Church, our mother and teacher, invites us to open our hearts to God's grace, so that we can celebrate with great joy the paschal victory of Christ the Lord over sin and death, which led Saint Paul to exclaim: “Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (1 Cor 15:54-55). Indeed, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is the heart of our faith and the pledge of our hope in the Father's great promise, already fulfilled in his beloved Son: life eternal (cf. Jn 10:28; 17:3).[1]

This Lent, as we share in the grace of the Jubilee Year, I would like to propose a few reflections on what it means to journey together in hope, and on the summons to conversion that God in his mercy addresses to all of us, as individuals and as a community.

First of all, to journey. The Jubilee motto, “Pilgrims of Hope”, evokes the lengthy journey of the people of Israel to the Promised Land, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. This arduous path from slavery to freedom was willed and guided by the Lord, who loves his people and remains ever faithful to them. It is hard to think of the biblical exodus without also thinking of those of our brothers and sisters who in our own day are fleeing situations of misery and violence in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. A first call to conversion thus comes from the realization that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good “examination of conscience” for all of us wayfarers.

Second, to journey together. The Church is called to walk together, to be synodal[2] Christians are called to walk at the side of others, and never as lone travellers. The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to leave ourselves behind and keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters.[3] Journeying together means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (cf. Gal 3:26-28). It means walking side-by-side, without shoving or stepping on others, without envy or hypocrisy, without letting anyone be left behind or excluded. Let us all walk in the same direction, tending towards the same goal, attentive to one another in love and patience.

Lenten Message Continued...

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs. Let us ask ourselves in the presence of the Lord whether, as bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity in the service of the Kingdom of God, we cooperate with others. Whether we show ourselves welcoming, with concrete gestures, to those both near and far. Whether we make others feel a part of the community or keep them at a distance.[4]This, then, is a second call to conversion: a summons to synodality.

Third, let us journey together in hope, for we have been given a promise. May the hope that does not disappoint(cf.Rom5:5), the central message of the Jubilee,[5]be the focus of our Lenten journey towards the victory of Easter. As Pope Benedict XVI taught us in the Encyclical Spe Salvi, “the human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: ‘neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord’ (Rom8:38-39)”. [6]Christ, my hope, has risen! [7]He lives and reigns in glory. Death has been transformed into triumph, and the faith and great hope of Christians rests in this: the resurrection of Christ!

This, then, is the third call to conversion: a call to hope, to trust in God and his great promise of eternal life. Let us ask ourselves: Am I convinced that the Lord forgives my sins? Or do I act as if I can save myself? Do I long for salvation and call upon God’s help to attain it? Do I concretely experience the hope that enables me to interpret the events of history and inspires in me a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?

Sisters and brothers, thanks to God’s love in Jesus Christ, we are sustained in the hope that does not disappoint (cf.Rom5:5). Hope is the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul”. [8]It moves the Church to pray for “everyone to be saved” (1 Tim2:4) and to look forward to her being united with Christ, her bridegroom, in the glory of heaven. This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: “Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one” (The Exclamations of the Soul to God, 15:3). [9]

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Hope, intercede for us and accompany us on our Lenten journey.
Rome, Saint John Lateran, 6 February 2025 Memorial of St Paul Miki and Companions, martyrs.

Franciscus

POPE FRANCIS

LENTEN PRAYER 2025

**Heavenly Father,
As we begin this sacred season,
we turn to You in faith and trust.
You call us, as pilgrims of hope,
to walk the path of conversion,
leaving behind all that holds us captive.**

**Lord Jesus,
You embraced the cross so we might share in Your victory.
As we journey through Lent,
may we die to self and rise to new life in You,
walking in mercy, justice, and love.**

**Holy Spirit,
Unite us as one body,
teaching us to listen, walk together,
and welcome all into Your embrace.
Renew our hearts with the hope that does not disappoint,
leading us to the joy of Easter.
Bless our Lenten journey, Lord,
that in prayer, fasting, and giving,
we may grow in love for You and one another.
Amen.**

Mary, Mother of Hope, pray for us.



Introduction to Lent 2025



Lent in this Jubilee Year of Hope

Lent is a sacred season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, calling each one of us to renewal in our relationship with God, one another and with all of God's creation. This year is particularly significant as the Church celebrates the Jubilee Year 2025: Pilgrims of Hope. At the opening of this special year Pope Francis reminded us that the Jubilee is a time of grace and renewal, urging each one of us to be messengers of hope in a troubled world.

The Jubilee invites each one of us to rekindle faith, grow trust in God's promises, fostering unity, justice, and solidarity. During Lent 2025, we are asked to journey together in faith, reflecting on our call to conversion and unity. Inspired by the readings of each Sunday, this resource provides reflections and activities to support schools, families, and parishes in their Lenten pilgrimage of hope.

Each day of Lent offers everyone an opportunity for personal renewal and reflection. A reflection for Ash Wednesday and each of the Sunday's of Lent is included in this resource to guide our thoughts and prayers on these days. We hope that this simple resource will lend a helping hand to all so that we can deepen our collective commitment to this holy season.



Using This Resource

This Lenten resource is designed to help parishes, schools, and families engage more deeply with the season of Lent in the Jubilee Year of Hope. Each week provides Gospel reflections, activities, and daily reflection prompts to guide individuals and communities on their Lenten journey.

For Parishes

- Use the Gospel reflections to guide homilies or small group discussions.
- Organise weekly Lenten gatherings, incorporating the activities and daily reflection questions.
- Encourage parishioners to commit to a Lenten challenge, such as acts of mercy, extra time for prayer, or community service.
- Promote the Sacrament of Reconciliation, using the weekly themes to prepare parishioners for confession.
- Incorporate the Jubilee theme of hope by inviting guest speakers or testimonies on faith and renewal.

For Schools

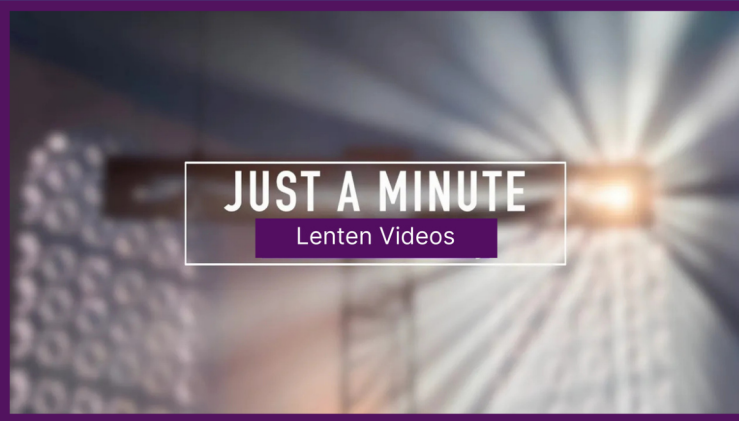
- Use the weekly Gospel readings as a foundation for school assemblies or classroom prayer.
- Create a Lenten prayer space where students can reflect, write prayers, or engage in acts of kindness.
- Incorporate Lenten challenges, encouraging students to practice fasting, almsgiving, and prayer in practical ways.
- Encourage students to journal their reflections using the daily prompts.
- Organize a charity initiative, linking the Lenten theme of renewal with service to the community.

For Families

- Read the Sunday Gospel together and discuss the reflection questions.
- Set aside time for family prayer, using the daily reflection prompts to guide conversations.
- Create a Lenten calendar with small, meaningful actions each day (e.g., pray for someone, donate food, call a loved one).
- Plan a family act of service, such as volunteering, visiting a lonely neighbour, or writing letters of encouragement.
- Use simple acts of fasting—such as giving up a luxury item—and discuss how these small sacrifices help refocus on faith.

By incorporating this resource into your Lenten journey, we hope individuals and communities will deepen their faith and embrace the Jubilee message of hope, renewal, and unity. Let us journey toward Easter with hearts open to God's transforming love.

Lenten Video Reflection Series



19 short videos are offered to schools, parishes and families to use during their journey through Lent. Video themes are listed below:

Ash Wednesday

Fasting

Lent Reflection

Prayer

Mercy

Forgiveness

Non-Judgment

Hope

Common Mission of the Church

Living Our Faith

Community and Family

Love

Gratitude

The Saints

Prayer

Mary and the Holy Spirit

Eucharist

Temptation

Veronica (People)



1. Scan QR Code to access video reflections

2. Begin with a moment of quiet prayer

3. Watch one of the videos

4. Reflect on the following questions:

What struck me about what was said in the video?

What does the message of the video mean for my life?

What action is the video calling me to?



Gospel for Ash Wednesday

Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflection on the Text:

Ash Wednesday calls us to a quiet, inward journey of transformation. In today's Gospel, Jesus warns against practicing faith for outward recognition. Instead, He invites us to a deeper, hidden intimacy with the Father—one that is not about appearances but about authenticity.

Lent is not about performance; it is about presence. When we pray, fast, and give alms, we do so not to be seen, but to open ourselves to God's grace. The ashes we receive today are a public sign, yet their meaning is deeply personal: a call to repentance, humility, and renewal.

This season challenges us to let go of distractions and seek God in the quiet places of our hearts. It is an invitation to turn away from self-seeking and to embrace the self-giving love of Christ. As we embark on this Lenten journey, may we seek not the world's approval but the hidden, life-giving presence of the Father, who sees all that is done in secret and rewards us with His mercy and love.

Reflection & Activities:

Schools: Create Lenten promises and write them on paper crosses for a classroom display, discussing how these commitments help in personal growth.

Families: Share a simple meal together, discussing ways to grow in kindness, generosity, and deeper prayer during Lent.

Parishes: Organize a communal prayer service focusing on personal and communal conversion, emphasising Pope Francis' message of hope and renewal.



Reflection Questions:

How can I begin Lent 2025 with a sincere heart, seeking God in the quiet of my soul?

How can I grow and nourish hope in my life, my family and my parish community?



Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent

Luke 4:1-13 **The temptation in the wilderness**

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.' But Jesus replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone.'

Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, 'I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms, for it has been committed to me and I give it to anyone I choose. Worship me, then, and it shall all be yours.' But Jesus answered him, 'Scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then he led him to Jerusalem and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said to him 'throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: He will put his angels in charge of you to guard you, and again: They will hold you up on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

But Jesus answered him, 'It has been said: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him, to return at the appointed time.

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflect on the Text:

The Gospel of the First Sunday of Lent invites us into the wilderness with Jesus, where He faces temptation and reveals what it means to trust in God alone. Though hungry, weary, and vulnerable, Jesus does not yield to the devil's promises of power, comfort, or security. Instead, He remains rooted in the truth of Scripture and in His relationship with the Father.

Lent is our own time in the wilderness—a season of stripping away distractions and false securities so that we may rely more fully on God. Like Jesus, we are tempted by the desire for control, recognition, and self-sufficiency. Yet His response reminds us that we do not live by bread alone, nor by the fleeting promises of the world, but by every word that comes from God.

This Gospel calls us to examine where we place our trust. Do we seek fulfillment in things that do not last? Do we put God to the test, expecting Him to serve our desires rather than surrendering to His will? As we begin this Lenten journey, may we, like Jesus, resist the temptations that pull us away from God and choose instead to worship and serve Him alone. In the silence of the wilderness, may we find the strength to walk more faithfully in His love.

Reflection & Activities:

Schools: Discuss common temptations (selfishness, impatience, dishonesty) and how Jesus' example can guide us.

Families: Identify a personal or family 'desert' (challenge) and commit to overcoming it through prayer and encouragement.

Parishes: Host a reflection evening, allowing participants to identify personal struggles and reflect on how God's word strengthens them.



Reflection Questions:

Where am I most tempted to turn away from God?

How can I trust Him more deeply?



Gospel for the Second Sunday of Lent

The Transfiguration

Luke 9:28-36

Jesus is transfigured before them

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' – He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.' And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflect on the Text:

The Transfiguration is a moment of profound revelation—Jesus, in prayer, is transfigured before Peter, James, and John, revealing His divine glory. In the brilliance of His light, the disciples catch a glimpse of who He truly is, yet they struggle to comprehend the mystery before them. Peter, overwhelmed, wants to capture the moment, to stay in the radiance of God’s presence. But the voice from the cloud speaks the deeper call: "This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to Him."

This Gospel reminds us that faith is not about grasping or holding onto spiritual highs but about listening, trusting, and following Jesus, even when the path leads down the mountain to suffering and sacrifice. Lent invites us to seek moments of encounter with God, not for our comfort, but for transformation. Just as the disciples had to descend from the mountain and continue their journey, we too are called to let the experience of God’s presence change us, shaping our hearts for deeper discipleship and service.

May we listen to Jesus, as the Father commands. May we allow His light to guide us through the shadows of doubt and fear, knowing that His glory is not only revealed in moments of brilliance but also in the daily call to love, serve, and follow Him in the ordinary moments of our life.

Reflection and Activities:

Schools: Encourage students to create ‘transformation journals,’ recording daily acts of kindness and moments where they see God at work in their lives.

Families: Share stories of personal transformation and discuss how faith has shaped family life and relationships.

Parishes: Organize a Lenten retreat focused on encountering Christ in prayer and seeking transformation in our spiritual lives.



Reflection Questions:

How has God transformed me in the past?

Where is God calling me to change now?



Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent

Parable of the Fig Tree

Luke 13:1-9 **'Leave the fig tree one more year'**

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflect on the Text:

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that suffering is not a punishment for sin, nor is prosperity a sign of righteousness and favour with God. Instead, Jesus calls all people to repentance, using the parable of the barren fig tree to illustrate both the urgency of conversion and the depth of God's mercy.

The fig tree has not borne fruit, yet it is not immediately cut down. The gardener pleads for more time—an image of God's patience with us. Like the tree, we are given opportunities to grow, to turn back to God, and to bear the fruits of faith, love, and justice. But this time is not limitless; conversion requires action.

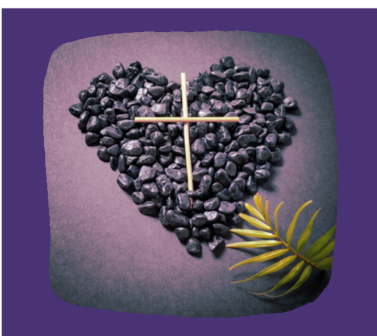
Lent is a season of grace, a time to experience God's abundant Love and to examine where our hearts have grown barren, allowing God to nourish us through prayer, fasting, and acts of charity. It is not about fear of judgment but about embracing the invitation to new life. Just as the gardener tends to the fig tree, so too does God give us the grace to grow. May we not waste this gift but use this season to return to Him with renewed hearts, bearing fruit that reflects His love in the world.

Reflection and Activities:

Schools: Have students plant seeds as a symbol of spiritual growth, reflecting on how small acts of kindness and faithfulness lead to deeper transformation.

Families: Reflect on ways to bring God's love to others, committing to one act of service or kindness each week.

Parishes: Offer a communal examination of conscience and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, inviting all to a renewed relationship with God.



Reflection Questions:

What areas of my life are bearing fruit?

Where do I need to grow?



Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:1-3,11-32

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly.



Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

The Prodigal Son

Continued...

“Then his son said, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.” But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.” And they began to celebrate.

‘Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. “Your brother has come” replied the servant “and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound.” He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, “Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening.”

“The father said, “My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.”

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflect on the Text:

Through the parable of the Prodigal Son Jesus offers a powerful reflection on God's boundless mercy. The younger son, having squandered his inheritance in reckless living, finds himself lost, hungry, and alone. It is only in his brokenness that he realizes what he has left behind—the love and security of his father's house. With humility, he returns home, expecting only a servant's place, but instead, he is met with extravagant mercy. His father runs to embrace him, restoring him not as a servant but as a beloved son.

Yet the parable does not end with this moment of reconciliation. The elder son, resentful and bitter, struggles to accept his brother's return. He has done everything “right” yet fails to grasp the true nature of his father's love—a love that does not keep score but rejoices when the lost are found.

Lent invites us to examine our hearts: Are we like the younger son, in need of returning home to God's mercy? Or do we find ourselves in the shoes of the elder son, struggling with resentment and failing to recognize God's generosity? Either way, the Father comes out to meet us, inviting us into the joy of reconciliation.

This Gospel reminds us that no matter how far we have strayed, God is always ready to welcome us back with open arms. It is an invitation to embrace both repentance and mercy, celebrating the joy of a love that restores, forgives, and makes us whole.

Reflection and Activities:

Schools: Discuss what forgiveness looks like, encouraging students to write letters of reconciliation to someone they may have wronged.

Families: Read the parable together and share experiences of forgiveness, discussing how it strengthens relationships.

Parishes: Organise an evening of reflection on God's mercy, possibly featuring testimonies from guest speakers that tell stories of reconciliation and healing.



Reflection Questions:

Where do I need to ask for forgiveness?

How can I offer it to others?



Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

**“Let the one among you who has not sinned be
the first to throw a stone”**

John 8:1-11

'Let the one among you who has not sinned be the first to throw a stone'
Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, 'Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?' They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, 'If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go away, and do not sin any more.'

Reflect and Act on the Text

Reflect on the text:

In a world that feels increasingly polarised and judgmental, the Gospel of the woman caught in adultery speaks directly to our times. If Jesus lived today, perhaps he might ask, “He who is without sin, show me your phone”. We live in an era where people are publicly shamed, where mistakes are broadcast widely via social media, people are condemned without mercy, and harsh judgments are often delivered without reflection on our own failings. Social media and public discourse can quickly turn into a modern-day stoning, with words used as weapons to condemn rather than heal.

Yet, Jesus refuses to engage in the mob’s thirst for punishment. He does not respond with outrage or condemnation but with silence, inviting reflection. When He finally speaks, His words dismantle their self-righteousness: “Let the one among you who has not sinned be the first to throw a stone.” One by one, the accusers walk away, recognizing their own brokenness.

Jesus does not excuse sin, but He also does not reduce the woman to her worst moment. Instead, He offers her dignity, mercy, and the possibility of renewal: He calls her forward, not defined by her past, but invited into a future shaped by grace.

In this Lenten season, this Gospel challenges us: Are we quick to condemn others while ignoring our own faults? Do we weaponize truth instead of using it to heal? Jesus calls us to step away from a culture of judgment and into a posture of mercy. Like the woman in the Gospel, we all stand in need of grace. May we be more willing to offer it to others, creating a world less defined by condemnation and more shaped by the transformative power of love.

Reflection and Activities:

Schools: Role-play different scenarios of responding to others with kindness and understanding, promoting empathy and forgiveness.

Families: Discuss a time when someone forgave you and how it felt to receive mercy. Talk about and explore ways to extend forgiveness to others.

Parishes: Host a reconciliation service focusing on healing past hurts and opening our hearts to the mercy of Christ.

Reflection Questions:

Do I judge others too quickly? How can I extend mercy instead?