

LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES
Walk in the Way of His Cross



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2021

First Sunday of Lent, February 21, 2021

Genesis 9.8-17 I Peter 3.18-22 Mark 1.9-15

The gospel lesson for today is from Mark's first chapter, a chapter we read from often in the Sundays after Epiphany. We turn to it again to be reminded of Jesus' baptism and his temptation by the devil in the wilderness as his ministry is beginning. Even as those baptized into the family of God, we remember that we, too, are tempted daily on our journeys of faith. The season of Lent is a gift from God in which we can patiently wait after the example of Noah while also reflecting on our sinfulness and asking for God's forgiveness, mercy, and grace. As we do so, may we pray that God will guide us to walk in the way of Jesus' cross.

Second Sunday of Lent, February 28, 2021

Genesis 17.1-7, 15-16 Romans 4.13-25 Mark 8.31-38

Both the readings from Genesis and Romans speak of the covenant that God established with Abraham who, despite real obstacles, was fully convinced that God would fulfill God's promises. Thus, Abraham was considered righteous and faithful. In today's gospel reading we hear Jesus calling us to that same righteous life, reminding us that those who lose their lives for the sake of the gospel will, indeed, be saved. We make choices each and every day about following Christ. We walk this Lenten journey in the way of Jesus' cross knowing that we are often in need of God's forgiveness for both our words and our actions. Thanks be to God whose love creates a new heart within us when we repent.

Third Sunday of Lent, March 7, 2021

Exodus 20.1-17 I Corinthians 1.18-25 John 2.13-22

As followers of Jesus, we know that God sent God's only Son to

turn the world upside down and in order to show us a more excellent way than the ways of the world. After their time in Egyptian slavery, God gave the Hebrew people the Ten Commandments to order their lives; the apostle, Paul, reminds the faithful in Corinth that Christ alone is God's power and God's wisdom. The gospel text is the familiar narrative of Jesus turning the tables on the moneychangers in the temple – reminding them that their ways are not God's ways. Sometimes our lives need to be turned upside down so that we give more thought to what God wants and less about we want or think we need. As we reflect on God's desire for us, we walk in the way of Jesus' cross.

Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 14, 2021

Numbers 21.4-9 Ephesians 2.1-10 John 3.14-21

On this Fourth Sunday in the season of Lent, we are reminded of just how much our God loves us with one word: grace. Paul tells the Ephesians, "You are saved by God's grace!" The familiar passage from John 3, which has been described as the "gospel in miniature," shares God's promise of life eternal for all who believe. All this because of the grace of God! How very blessed we are. Recognizing those blessings makes us stop and reflect on our own sinfulness in the face of God's grace. Fortunately for us, the power of sin is no match for Jesus Christ who saves us from ourselves. May God bless us as we seek to walk in the way of Jesus' cross.

Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 21, 2021

Jeremiah 31.31-34 Hebrews 5.5-10 John 12.20-33

The covenant celebrated on the Second Sunday of Lent is remembered again today. God declares God's intentions: "I will be their God, and they will be my people." God's lessons will be engraved on our hearts. Oh, if that were how we always lived. But we confess that it is not. Jesus reminds us in our reading from John's gospel that our sinfulness must die away in order for much fruit to be

borne; may our reflections in walking the way of Jesus' cross allow that fruitfulness to flourish.

Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021

Isaiah 50.4-9a Philippians 2.5-11 Mark 11.1-11

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" So shouted the crowds as Jesus entered the holy city of Jerusalem. His entire ministry had been directed to this triumphal entry. The people spread their cloaks and waved their palm branches to welcome the One who was their King. Their celebration will quickly give way to the grief and despair of Good Friday but, on this day, there is rejoicing. As we pause before the days of Holy Week unfold continuing to walk in the way of Jesus' cross, we rejoice in God's gift of forgiveness and love for which our Savior died so that we might have life in all its fullness.

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

Acts 10.34-43 I Corinthians 15.1-11 Mark 16.1-8

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Throughout the centuries, the Church has proclaimed this truth. On this highest, holiest day of the Christian year, we celebrate that our Savior, who had died, is alive again! Our mourning turns to gladness as we move beyond the despair of Good Friday. Even though we celebrate the Day of Resurrection each year, we stand in awe at the miracle of God's love for us. Such rejoicing never gets old; the story touches our hearts and souls with the dawn of each Easter morning. The tomb is empty and Jesus comes forth to fulfill the ultimate goal of our Lenten days: the new heart that God's love and forgiveness create in each of us.

