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2025 LENTEN MEDITATIONS



By Fr. Joseph Mary Wolfe, MFVA, EWTN Chaplain

2025 Lenten Meditations



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Dear Family,

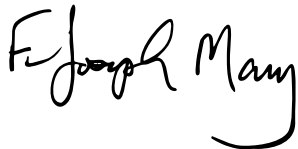
A friend and I were talking recently about the saints: that they show us how to live the Gospel and put it into practice in the daily challenges and questions of our lives. In the saints we see the reality of the supernatural – and their example helps us to see in our own times the Hand of God present in all things and circumstances.

The Preface of Saints for Mass beautifully puts it this way:

*By their way of life you offer us an example,
by communion with them you give us companionship,
by their intercession, sure support,
so that, encouraged by so great a cloud of witnesses,
we may run as victors in the race before us
and win with them the imperishable crown of glory.* (Preface I of Saints)

During this holy season of Lent, I will present reflections on the Mass Readings considering how holy men and women put these things into practice in their own times with their own unique personalities, weaknesses, and strengths. Jesus is Lord, and we can learn much from the example of those who followed Him and “finished the race” (2 Timothy 4:7).

Peace and blessings to you in Christ,



Fr. Joseph Mary Wolfe, MFVA



Wednesday, March 5 | Ash Wednesday

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Joel 2:12-18
Responsorial Psalm:	51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17
Second Reading:	2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2
Gospel:	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

The English writer George Eliot wrote: “The growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and the fact that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half-owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs.”

On All Saints' Day we celebrate the far greater number of unknown men and women who lived hidden lives of holiness in their day-in and day-out lives – often unremarkable and ordinary, but extraordinary in the love with which they did all things: giving alms “not letting their left hand know what their right hand was doing”; praying in their “inner room” to their “Father in secret”; fasting and denying themselves in many and various hidden ways, known to God alone.

The Gospel for Ash Wednesday concludes with these words of Jesus: “And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.” These unknown saints now know the truth of Jesus' words and promises. They are now being repaid in the joys and glory of Heaven forever.

As we begin this holy season of Lent, let us choose the way of the saints, of hiddenness, often unnoticed by men, but always seen and delighted in by the Father who will repay us. In fact, the repayment already begins in this life with the Divine life He imparts to us.

All you unknown Saints and Friends of God, pray for us!



Sunday, March 9 | First Sunday of Lent

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Responsorial Psalm:	91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
Second Reading:	Romans 10:8-13
Gospel:	Luke 4:1-13

Ven. Matt Talbot became dependent on alcohol as a teenager. Dropping out of school, he worked various jobs at the Dublin docks – his wages often being squandered at the pub, leaving him in a state of destitution and despair for a decade.

The turning point came, when, at the age of 28, Talbot, penniless and humiliated, vowed to change his ways. He went to Confession and, amid the difficulties of withdrawal, he turned to prayer and found solace in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and in the Rosary. He rose early to attend daily Mass before beginning work at 6 a.m. He was able to do his work, but every time there was a lull in his work, he'd be either reading or praying.

Do you suffer from being unable to overcome temptation in your life – even though you so want it to go away? Learn from Jesus in the Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent.

Jesus “was led by the Spirit.” Invite the Holy Spirit DAILY to guide you and lead you to freedom.

Jesus quoted the Scriptures. The Word of God will always be a source of strength for you when you experience temptation.

Finally, Jesus is THE stronger One. Like Matt Talbot, find help and solace in His Real Presence in the Eucharist and in meditating on His life in the Rosary.

Jesus, remain with us!

Lord ... bring us to freedom and victory!

Amen.



Sunday, March 16 | Second Sunday of Lent

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
Responsorial Psalm:	27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14
Second Reading:	Philippians 3:17-4:1
Gospel:	Luke 9:28b-36

On the Second Sunday of Lent, we always have a Gospel account of the Transfiguration of Jesus, which is a reminder to us of St. Paul's words in today's second reading that "our citizenship is in heaven." It also speaks to us of the necessity of prayer, by which we come into a living contact with Heaven. Listen to the words of St. John Marie Vianney in his catechesis on prayer. He said:

My little children, the Christian's treasure is not on earth but in Heaven. Our thoughts, then, ought to be directed to where our treasure is. This is the glorious duty of man: to pray and to love. If you pray and love, that is where a man's happiness lies.

Prayer is nothing else but union with God. When one has a heart that is pure and united with God, he is given a kind of serenity and sweetness that makes him ecstatic, a light surrounds him with marvelous brightness.

Through prayer we receive a foretaste of Heaven and something of Paradise comes down upon us. Prayer never leaves us without sweetness. It is a honey that flows into the soul and makes all things sweet. When we pray properly, sorrows disappear like snow before the sun.

Family, do not deprive your soul of its happiness – the foretaste of Heaven which is found in prayer. Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here."



Sunday, March 23 | Third Sunday of Lent

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15
Responsorial Psalm:	103:1-4, 6-8, 11
Second Reading:	1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Gospel:	Luke 13:1-9

Bl. Carlo Acutis is best known for *The Eucharistic Miracles of the World* panels he produced, which are now on every continent of the world. Yet, there is much more to his story. His mother, Antonia, said this of her son:

He had made the Eucharist the center of his life, and he directed towards the most needy the love that God poured out through him. His immense generosity made him interested in everyone: the foreigners, the handicapped, children, beggars. To be close to Carlo was to be close to a fountain of fresh water.

Carlo helped the homeless and the poor by volunteering at a soup kitchen in Milan and sharing his pocket money with them. He also showed remarkable charity toward the elderly who were alone.

In today's Gospel, Jesus told the parable of the fruitless fig tree. Bearing no fruit, it was to be cut down. But the gardener begged for more time and attention to be given it. And so, it was given more time – **but not an unlimited** amount of time.

Carlo Acutis bore much fruit in his short 15 years on this earth. We still have time – **but not an unlimited** amount of time – to bear fruit, fruit that will endure unto eternal life.

Bl. Carlo, pray for us, that we may bear as much fruit as possible in the time that remains for us by serving the Lord and others generously, lovingly, and cheerfully.



Sunday, March 30 | Fourth Sunday of Lent

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Joshua 5:9, 10-12
Responsorial Psalm:	34:2-7
Second Reading:	2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Gospel:	Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

St. Augustine wrote of a moment of terrible anguish as he wrestled within himself over his sinful life. Flinging himself down with a flood of tears, he prayed,

How long, how long shall I go on saying tomorrow and again tomorrow? Why not now, why not have an end to my uncleanness this very hour? ... And suddenly I heard a voice, a boy's voice or a girl's voice, I do not know: but it was a sort of sing-song, repeated again and again, "Take and read, take and read."

Augustine continued: *I read the passage upon which my eyes first fell: "Not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness. ... But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh. ..."*

Augustine concluded, *I had no wish to read further, and no need. For in that instant ... it was as though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart, and all the darkness of uncertainty vanished away.*

God used a passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans to speak to his prodigal son, Augustine, and he experienced "a light" that changed his life forever. In the Gospel parable for the fourth Sunday of Lent, the wayward son had a sudden moment of light – of a deep sorrowful awareness of his need to return to the Father – the Father who met him with His merciful embrace and forgiveness. What are you waiting for? Why not today? Why not now?



Sunday, April 6 | Fifth Sunday of Lent

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Isaiah 43:16-21
Responsorial Psalm:	126:1-6
Second Reading:	Philippians 3:8-14
Gospel:	John 8:1-11

St. Mary of Egypt learned how to use her body to get what she wanted – living this way for 17 years. She seduced her way onto a boat, joining pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem she joined them on their way to a church. No matter how hard she tried she could not get past the entrance – something was holding her back. Mary walked to the side of the church, fell on her knees, and began to cry.

Seeing a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, she became overwhelmed with sorrow for her many sins, begged forgiveness, and asked the Blessed Virgin to help her. Now she was able to enter the church without a problem, where she kissed a relic of the True Cross.

After receiving the Sacraments, she spent the rest of her life in solitude and prayer in the desert. A priest, Fr. Zosimas, discovered her 47 years later, where he learned the details of her life. Recognizing her great sanctity, he brought her Holy Communion before she died in 421.

In today's Gospel, Jesus told the adulterous woman that He did not condemn her. **Pause and think about this.** He continued, "Go, and from now on do not sin any more." You see, Jesus loves us too much to leave us where we were. He calls us higher – from darkness to light. Neither does Jesus condemn you – but He loves you too much to leave you where you were. Follow Him higher.



Sunday, April 13 | Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Today's Readings

At the Procession:	Luke 19:28-40
First Reading:	Isaiah 50:4-7
Responsorial Psalm:	22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Second Reading:	Philippians 2:6-11
Gospel:	Luke 22:14-23:56

In her Second Letter to St. Agnes of Prague, St. Clare of Assisi wrote:

*Look upon Him Who became contemptible for you, and follow Him. ...
Though more beautiful than the children of men (Psalm 44:3), your Spouse became for your salvation
the lowest of men, despised, struck, scourged untold times throughout His whole body, and then died
amid the sufferings of the Cross. ...*

*gaze upon Him,
consider Him,
contemplate Him,
as you desire to imitate Him.*

This may well be thought of as St. Clare's steps of prayer – and one that we might imitate during this Holy Week.

Gaze upon a crucifix or the Stations of the Cross in awe and wonder at the love of God revealed there.

Consider in your mind how this came about because of our sins – and God's free initiative to rescue us from them – by becoming sin for our sake (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Contemplate. Let these considerations now move to the heart. Let sorrow for sin and devotion for the Divine Lover move your heart to repay His love with your love, gratitude, life, and service. And finally, **Imitate** Him. Our inner self demands that we express our love in the way we live by seeking to imitate Him who showed us the greatest love. At the Last Supper, Jesus said, "I have given you an example. What I have done, you also should do" (John 13:15).

Greatly to be loved is He who loved us so greatly.



Sunday, April 20 | Easter Sunday

Today's Readings

First Reading:	Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Responsorial Psalm:	118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Second Reading:	Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
Gospel:	John 20:1-9

The sixth of the seven joys of Mary recalled in the Franciscan Crown Rosary is *The Appearance of Jesus to Mary After His Resurrection*. Pope St. John Paul II, at his general audience on May 21, 1997, said:

The Gospels mention various appearances of the risen Christ, but not a meeting between Jesus and his Mother. This silence must not lead to the conclusion that after the Resurrection Christ did not appear to Mary. ...

How could the Blessed Virgin, present in the first community of disciples (cf. Acts 1:14), be excluded from those who met her divine Son after he had risen from the dead?

Indeed, it is legitimate to think that the Mother was probably the first person to whom the risen Jesus appeared. Could not Mary's absence from the group of women who went to the tomb at dawn (cf. Mk 16:1; Mt 28:1) indicate that she had already met Jesus? (my emphasis)

Pope John Paul II lastly mentioned that the first witnesses of the Resurrection, by Jesus' will, were the women who had remained faithful at the foot of the Cross and therefore were more steadfast in faith.

Dearest Mother Mary, help us to rejoice with you in your Son's Resurrection and the promise of our own.

Queen of Heaven, rejoice! Alleluia!
For He whom you did merit to bear, Alleluia!
Has risen as He said, Alleluia!
Pray for us to God, Alleluia!



2025 Lenten Meditations

Dates in Lent and Easter Triduum 2025

Ash Wednesday

March 5

First Sunday of Lent

March 9

Second Sunday of Lent

March 16

Solemnity of St. Joseph

March 19

Third Sunday of Lent

March 23

The Annunciation of the Lord

March 25

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 30

Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 6

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

April 13

Holy Thursday

April 17

Good Friday

April 18

Holy Saturday

April 19

Easter Sunday

April 20



Online Resources

Lent

St. Joseph

Annunciation of the Lord

Holy Week

Easter

Divine Mercy Sunday

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