

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT - 6 March 2022

Homily Pointers

About the Story

Have you noticed that here Jesus is filled with the Spirit and led by the Spirit?

Jesus was in a dialogue with the devil, he didn't rely on himself but trusted that God's word would help him.

Jesus was on a long journey of forty days, that's a long time to keep going and trusting

About Us

We too are on a journey with Jesus, we do this every Lent, it is different this year because we are also walking together on a synodal path. Can we make the effort to take part in the journey?

Jesus relied on God's word: as we listen to each other we too will hold onto words from scripture that will inspire and challenge us.

This synodal Lenten journey is an opportunity to renew ourselves, get back to basics, and journey together into God's future.

Intercessions

Jesus was led by the Spirit on a journey of forty days, we pray that as we set out on our synodal Lenten journey we too will allow the Spirit to lead us.

Jesus was inspired by the scriptures and pondered every word deeply, may we rely on God's word to strengthen and support us as we walk with each other this Lent.

Communion Reflection

During this first week of Lent we try to keep our focus on what type of journey we are starting. It is a time to recall what Jesus did for each of us.

The path that Jesus walked was in the desert wilderness. Take time this week to reflect and even walk that path that ultimately led Jesus to Jerusalem.... to his death and resurrection. This path can lead us through challenges and can bring us rewards.

Lent is not an easy path. We are all faced with choices and decisions. We can all be tempted to cut corners in our daily lives. Just as Jesus was tempted, we can be tempted too.

Lent gives us space to model our lives on Jesus' life. If we can keep our focus on him, our journey through Lent can be an adventure in our living faith. Lent is personal and we can rekindle our personal relationship with Jesus.

This Lent as we embark on the journey towards Jerusalem it is good to remember that we are not alone. Many people will walk this path of faith this Lent. Let us keep them and the Lord in our sight. Let us call on the name of the Lord in how we live our lives.

2nd SUNDAY OF LENT - 13 March 2022

Homily Pointers

About the Story

Have you noticed how in this passage Jesus took his disciples to a high place to pray? It's amazing that when Jesus prays he's transformed.

There's a strong invitation here to listen.

The disciples were so moved by the experience, they had to reflect deeply about it afterwards in silence.

About Us

As we continue to prepare for our synodal gatherings we are also invited to pray, to take time with Jesus and listen to what he's saying to us.

Listening is also at the core of the synodal process. It's a particular kind of listening, it's a listening to understand.

It's this kind of listening that transforms us, and will in the end transform our Church too.

Intercessions

Jesus was transformed as he prayed on the mountain with his disciples, may we be open to the Spirit's transforming power to change us as we journey together on our synodal pathway.

Just as the radiant light transformed Jesus, may we open ourselves up more and more to the guiding light of the Holy Spirit as we listen to each other and share with each other.

Communion Reflection

Would you listen to him when he says nice things to you - 'Do not be afraid' (Mt 14:28)– 'You are the salt of the earth' (Mt 5:13) or 'You are the light of the world' (Mt 5:14) – You are worth more than hundreds of sparrows' (Mt 10:31) – **would you listen and take them to heart?**

Would you listen to him when he says hard things to you - about the hungry and the needy - 'give them something to eat yourselves' (Mt 14:16) – 'give to anyone who asks' (Mt 5:42) – or about forgiveness 'not seven I tell you but seventy seven times' (Mt 18:22) or 'love your enemies' (Mt 5:44) – or 'Why did you doubt?' (Mt 14:32) - **would you listen and respond?**

Would you listen to Him when he says words of hope to you – 'anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it' (Mt 16:25) – 'where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them' (Mt 18:20) – 'the last will be first, and the first, last' (Mt 20:16) - 'Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them' (Mt 5:7) – **would you listen and let Him transform you?**

3rd Sunday of Lent 2022 – 20 March 2022

Homily Pointers

Give me one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it

Another season of Lent. Another opportunity to fine-tune our conscience about the needs of our brothers and sisters in the developing world. Will next year be another one of self-indulgence with the occasional euro thrown to charity? What long term initiatives will we take on this year that will make a difference to the lives of others? How can the Synodal pathway help our community discern the movement of the Spirit on this topic?

I have seen the miserable state of my people

I did not know that so many people on this planet die every day from hunger and thirst. I did not know that reckless use of limited resources disproportionately affects the vulnerable

I did not know that genocide is going on today in many parts of the world.

On our Synodal pathway let us open our eyes to see with our hearts what is happening around us and respond as followers of Christ.

The Lord is compassion and love

The words of Saint Teresa of Avila – ‘Christ has no body now but yours’ – spring to mind. We are his compassion and love as we walk on our Synodal journey today.

All ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink

Many say ‘Amen’ each Sunday as they receive the body and blood of Christ. Like the followers of Moses some of us ‘litter the desert’ of life with our failures to live up to the challenge of that ‘Amen’. That challenge is to ‘become what we receive’. What are we becoming as we continue on our Synodal pathway?

Intercessions

We pray for the patience of the vineyard keeper, for the wisdom to wait for God’s growth in our life and to allow us to realise God’s plan for each of us.

We pray for our family members who introduced us to the name of the Lord and we give thanks that God who will continue to guide and send us out into deeper waters with the trust that we can make a difference.

Communion Reflection

In the Gospel story today, the one who tended the fig tree asked for more time.

‘Give me one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it’.

We can be impatient with the progress of initiatives because of our preoccupation with instant solutions. The Synodal pathway requires patience, hope and real engagement – it takes time. As we sit after Communion we take time to pause and listen with openness.

‘When a Chinese bamboo tree is planted in its first year it is watered and fertilized but there is no sign of growth. In its second year it is watered and fertilized and there is still no sign of growth. The same happens in its third and fourth year. The fifth year is different. In the space of six weeks it grows to roughly ninety feet. The Chinese bamboo is a real lesson in patience for us all.’

4th Sunday of Lent – 27 March 2022

Homily Pointers

Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you

Lent is a time for making peace and in particular for celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation. Let us walk the road of reconciliation together this Lent.

Jesus forgives our sins and takes the shame away.

Why do we still not forgive ourselves?

From all my terrors he set me free

The atmosphere at a service of reconciliation and in the confessional room should be warm and welcoming. For some people it is like going to the dentist – a necessary evil. We are all human and on this Christian path together.

Why the terror?

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We are ambassadors for Christ

Ambassadors represent the interest of their countries and show the world what they have to offer. Jesus reached out to people and accompanied them on their journey.

Why not give it a try yourself?

This man welcomes sinners and eats with them

Those who sat down to eat with Jesus with open hearts were changed as a result of his acceptance and love. Those walking the Synodal pathway open themselves to transformation. The elder brother of the Prodigal stayed outside scowling at the feast prepared for the forgiven one with a heart full of anger and resentment.

Why do we judge others for being at the Eucharistic table?

Intercessions

We pray for the grace to walk the road of reconciliation together this Lent, knowing that Jesus forgives our sins, that we will have the courage to forgive ourselves.

We pray, during these Synodal days for those who reach out with courage to encounter people who have become disconnected from their faith and their family.

Communion Reflection

We celebrate and we rejoice
because you have called us to be in your company.

We celebrate and we rejoice
because we know you are always looking out for us.

We celebrate and we rejoice
because there is never a moment when you reject us,
you are always on our side.

In this moment of communion you find us, you run toward us,
you rejoice in us.

We were lost, but now we are found.

We celebrate and we rejoice.

5th SUNDAY of LENT - 3 April 2022

Homily Pointers

See I am doing a new deed

Just before Holy Week we take stock of how we have been living Lent. Is there anything new going on? It's not too late to do some 'new deed'.

How many steps have you taken on the Synodal Pathway?

They come back full of song

Lent is not meant to be easy but challenging. Taking on a new food regimen for example is difficult. The rewards for our health give us a spring in our step.

What was the Synodal Pathway like for you?

I am racing for the finish

We are nearly there. Keep it up. Now that we are doing so well do we want to stop at Easter or is what we have taken on a life - long challenge?

How can the Synodal movement continue after Lent?

Go away and don't sin anymore

Jesus sees our faults but he does not weigh us down with them. He lifts us up with his grace and acceptance. Yet he challenges us not to go back to our old 'ways'.

How can continue to embrace the change that Synodal pathway offers

Intercessions

We pray in gratitude for all the marvels that God is bringing to us, our friendships and our Christian community that we may continue to listen to each other in new ways during Lent.

We pray for the grace to follow Jesus by our compassionate and non-judgemental attitude to others.

Communion Reflection

Nothing can come between us, and your love Lord.

If we are suffering, you are with us.

If we are experiencing loss or sadness, you are with us.

In every difficulty, you are with us.

You are doing a new deed in us, even now.

You don't recall the past, you make everything new in us.

Open us up to the new paths you have made for us.

A path where we journey together.

Passion Sunday - 10 April 2022

Intercessions

We pray for the courage to take up the challenges that life offers us rather than be bystanders on the road of life.

We pray that our eyes and ears will be opened this week as we accompany Jesus on his journey towards Jerusalem.

Communion Reflection

If these keep silence the stones will cry out

The message of the Gospel cannot be contained or confined.

We who carry the Good News cannot be muzzled or silenced except by our own fear.

So let us not be dumb bystanders at the Passion today
or be fair weather Christians waving and cheering in the good times
and running away when things get tough.

How do we respond to the suffering face of Christ today?

How are we going to be Simon to others today?

How are we going to show the solidarity of Mary at the foot of someone's cross today?

How are we going to offer the gift of forgiveness to those who torture us today?

How are we going to make sense of the passion in our own lives and continue with hope on the journey towards resurrection?