



LENT *Faith Conversations*

Week of March 21-27

Sunday Readings: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51, Hebrews 5:7-9, John 12:20-33

ADULT REFLECTION

As we near the end of Lent and approach Holy Week the Sunday readings reveal a greater sense of urgency, a sense that something big is about to happen. In the First Reading, the prophet Jeremiah says that a new covenant is coming. This covenant will be deeper than the first, when God was “master”. This law will not be on stone tablets. “I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Jesus proclaims in the Gospel “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” He then teaches that “unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.” This speaks to the sacrifice that Jesus is about to make by surrendering his life for us. It is also a powerful metaphor of God’s call for each of us to die to our own expectations, narrowness, and selfishness and invite God to transform our lives into something more beautiful, more meaningful, more fruitful.

Have you opened your heart to God and allowed him to write upon it? What has God written there?

What destructive or selfish aspects of your life do you stubbornly refuse to let go of? How can the example of Jesus giving his life on the Cross help you open to the possibility of fruitful surrender?

FAMILY CONVERSATION & PRAYER STARTERS

The first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, tells the story of the developing relationship between God and the Israelite people. *How would we describe the relationship God now offers all of humanity through his divine Son, Jesus?*

What have we experienced of seed planting? What does Jesus mean when he says that a grain of wheat must die to produce much fruit? Can you think of a time where the “death” or “giving up” of one thing led to the “birth” or growth of another good – even better – thing?

PRAYER

Good Jesus, draw us to yourself this Lent and make us your people. Write your law of love on our very hearts. Please accept our ordinary acts of love, the “grains of wheat,” we offer you today. We trust you will transform them into something beautiful for us and for the world. Amen.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

“Die” to something this week that can directly give “life” to someone else. Intentionally link your fasting and almsgiving: bake frozen pizzas instead of ordering in or avoid superfluous spending—donate the savings, spend your weekend yard-work time working on the yard of someone who’s not able, give all the dessert you baked (the smell of which is filling the house) to a family that is struggling.