



LENT Faith Conversations

Week of March 20-26

Sunday Readings: Exodus 3: 1-8, 13-15; Psalm 103; I Corinthians 10: 1-6, 10-12; Luke 13: 1-9

ADULT REFLECTION

Sunday Readings Summary: In this week's readings we hear about the mercy of God. In the first reading, God sees the suffering of his people enslaved in Egypt, and comes to rescue them through Moses. The Psalm repeats, "The Lord is kind and merciful." In the Gospel, Jesus explains that God does not kill off the unjust but rather, like the hopeful gardener, gives people every opportunity to choose what is right.

A gardener can cultivate and fertilize and prune. But he cannot make a tree bear fruit. Similarly, God makes himself known, shows us the way to live in Jesus, and displays his love in countless ways. He cannot, however, make our choices for us. God wants to be in a loving relationship with each of us. And that requires our free response. If we choose to respond to his love with love, if we remain in him as a branch grafted to the vine (see John 15), then his very own life, love – the Holy Spirit, will dwell within us. The Spirit will give our lives purpose and direction, and make us fully alive and fruitful.

For Reflection: Such mercy gently holds us. *Will we reach out our roots and branches and let our loving God bear fruit in and through us? How do we do this?*

Many Catholics feel a certain uneasiness with God the Holy Spirit. *How is your understanding of the Spirit helped by thinking of the Spirit as merciful Love, or as God's own life/breath/power flowing in you?*

FAMILY CONVERSATION & PRAYER STARTERS

Our Sunday readings teach us about God's mercy. Do you know what mercy is? How would you define it? (Having a heart for the misery/suffering of others – as if it were your own, and doing what you can to take away that misery.) How have you experienced mercy in your life? What was that like?

How do we experience God's mercy toward us? (Forgiveness, help in our weakness, the love and support of others, a moment of insight when we're anxious or in doubt, a new day, etc.)

How can we show mercy to each other here at home? How can we show it to others beyond our family?

PRAYER

Merciful Father, thank you for patiently and lovingly providing all we need to grow. Forgive our sins and shortcomings. Teach us how to remain in Jesus this week, so that your Holy Spirit can help us be your mercy for others. Amen.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Google the corporal/spiritual works of mercy. Choose one. Who in your life/community is in need of this form of mercy? What can you give up this week so as to provide it for them?



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