

REPENT

Meditations for the
Season of Lent

AND BELIEVE

Jesus Predicts His Own Death

John 12:20–33

As the Gospel opens, Jesus is well aware that his time on earth is coming to a close. In fact, he admits that he is “troubled,” but adds, “Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Upset as he admits he is, he still puts the Father first.



AdobeStock, Above and bottom right: Shutterstock

In today’s Gospel, a voice responds to Jesus’ prayer by saying, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” Also, Jesus tries to explain to the crowds his true identity, the Son of Man, and the real meaning of the cross — the salvation of all the world.

Through his obedience to the Father, Jesus reveals God’s glory. He foreshadows his crucifixion and death through the language of service: “Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will be my servant” (Jn 12:26). As we enter the final weeks of Lent, we are called to bring forth the glory of the Lord as we follow Christ in service to God and one another. Let us remember not just the pain of Christ’s passion, but the reason for his death — to bring us the gift of reconciliation with God the Father.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Have you ever considered that Jesus might have been “troubled” about what was going to happen to him? How can the way he dealt with his anxiety help you deal with your own worries and fears?
- Is there someone in my life that I need to forgive? Do I keep in mind that it is as we forgive that we are forgiven?
- How am I doing on keeping my Lenten discipline?

“When Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan and was baptized by John the Baptist, he did so not because he was in need of repentance, or conversion; he did it to be among people who need forgiveness, among us sinners, and to take upon himself the burden of our sins.”

— Pope Francis



The Sacrament of Reconciliation

According to Church law, all Catholics “having reached the age of discretion” are required to confess all “grave sins” at least once a year. It is also recommended that they confess venial sins. Lent is the ideal time to make a good confession. Most parishes offer extended confession times and even special penance services.

LENT PRAYER

Unto to you, I cry, my God!

“This is the promise that he made us: eternal life.” — 1 John 2:25

Thank you, my God, for your steadfast love, which guides me in this life and waits to welcome me home to the next.

FamilyActivity

Random Acts of Kindness

We are called to serve one another with joyful hearts! As a family, write out on slips of paper several random acts of kindness that can be carried out over the week. Include things like smiling at someone, picking up trash, making a phone call to a grandparent, and helping someone carry a package. Throughout the week, have each family member draw a slip and complete the action. When everyone has completed their random act, talk about what happened and how it felt.



Fasting, one of the Lenten practices, is often observed as fasting from food. It is not because our bodies need to be punished (or that we need to go on a diet). We fast to allow our physical hunger to remind us of our spiritual hunger, our need for God. We fast to remind ourselves of our baptismal commitment and need for renewal.

Catechism CONNECTION

“It is called the **sacrament of confession**, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. In a profound sense it is also a ‘confession’ — acknowledgment and praise — of the holiness of God and of his mercy toward sinful man.

“It is called the **sacrament of forgiveness**, since by the priest’s sacramental absolution God grants the penitent ‘pardon and peace.’

“It is called the **sacrament of Reconciliation**, because it imparts to the sinner the love of God who reconciles: ‘Be reconciled to God’ (2 Cor 5:20). He who lives by God’s merciful love is ready to respond to the Lord’s call: ‘Go; first be reconciled to your brother’ (Mt 5:24).”
— *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1424