

# Lenten Reflections and Prayers

## One for each day of the remaining weeks in Lent

*My dear parishioners and visitors to our site. May I ask you to pray each day as Lent continues to unfold for the following intentions:*

### *On Monday*

let us pray for the scientists and the medical experts who are leading the response to the present crisis. May they share their knowledge and expertise with humility and integrity.

### *On Tuesday*

let us pray for those who lead us in government at this time. We pray for wisdom and discernment that they will do their utmost to serve their people faithfully and without self-interest.

### *On Wednesday*

let us pray for those whose working lives will change as a result of the Coronavirus crisis. We pray that those who lose their jobs will find work which will fulfill their hopes and enable them to live with dignity. We pray for fairness and justice in the workplace.

### *On Thursday*

let us place ourselves with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. We will watch and pray, knowing that he is with us in our uncertainty and fear. May we hear in our hearts the words from the Prophet Isaiah: 'Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you.'

### *On Friday*

let us pray for those who are using their skills in caring for those who are ill and frail. May the Lord strengthen them and give them confidence that they are doing his work in the healing of bodies, souls and spirits.

### *On Saturday*

let us pray for those who are feeling ill at this time and those who are caring for them. May the Lord show them his healing love and give them peace.

### *On Sunday*

let us hold in our hearts the sorrow of those who have lost loved ones to the Coronavirus. May those who have died now rest in the presence of the Lord who suffered with them.

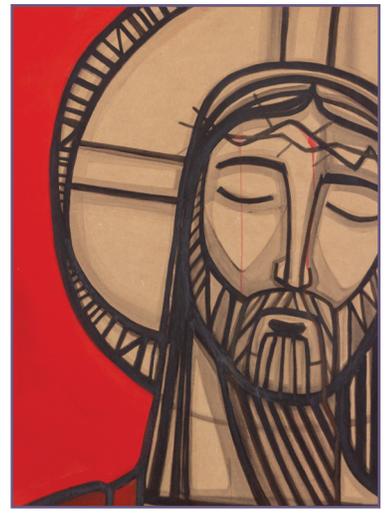
**&** *As we come upon Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion in a few weeks, we are at the entrance to Holy Week. We will have made a Lenten journey and will stand with Jesus before the gates of Jerusalem. We know that once we enter through those gates we shall be swept up in events that we cannot control and that will bring us to the very edge of what we can bear, as we walk with Jesus to Calvary and the tomb.*

*Our Lenten journey with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has become an unusual one indeed. We have walked into the valley of the surreal. The new pandemic has left most members of our society feeling afraid, anxious, isolated and alone. In an increasingly tension-filled society, the Coronavirus could rapidly mutate into an epidemic of despair.*

*But Christian stewards are strengthened by their faith, courage and hope as they have for centuries in times of pandemic. It is precisely at times like these that their stewardship of faith and love of neighbor make the Gospel of Jesus Christ real and not just a mere sentiment. More than ever, their lives of faith give them the courage to live with an open heart even at the center of seemingly unbearable tension.*

*Holy Week will teach us that God is able to transform everything about us, especially our fears and anxieties, our unfaithfulness and sinfulness. But to be open to that transformation in our lives requires some radical changes in our hearts, so much so that we might be stunned and frightened at the thought. It requires the will to endure some dying to self.*

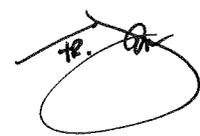
*Let us start with our stewardship of prayer: Prayer is the great mediating force that gives us hope. Jesus instructed his disciples to pray always and not lose heart. Let us make a commitment to prayer as we have never done before, with great trust that our prayer has real power.*



*Stewardship of health: Let us embrace a new health regimen that includes obsessively maintaining a scrupulous hygienic routine so that we may take better care of ourselves and avoid infecting others. Stewardship of our neighbor: Let us follow Jesus' injunction to love our neighbor as ourselves. Let us remember to check in on our neighbors and older family members and help where we may. And let us ultimately be ready and willing to sacrifice for others without counting the cost to ourselves.*

*The gates to the city of Jerusalem are open even now. Jesus does not steer us away from the gates and send us back into the silence of the desert. He keeps us close to him as we stand at the entrance. He bids us peace and assures us that he will always be with us if we will only listen. With the help of God's grace, let us embrace our faith more fully and find the strength to enter into the great city with Jesus, to walk with him to his cross and his resurrection with courage and hope.*

*In the Great Hope of the Risen Lord,*



Fr. Jan

*P.S. Please be with us in the liturgies of Holy Week, though virtually, that we might still know the relationship we have with one another ... looking forward to once again worship and praise God when we are finally able.*

