

Sunday, Mar 01, 2026

The three-tent solution

Saint Peter's idea at the Transfiguration charms us with its reasonableness. When blessed with the sturdy foundation of the law of Moses, the strong prophetic tradition of Elijah, and the kindly ministry of Jesus, why not build an institution that encompasses all three? Peter's plan wasn't faulty, because the church does honor all these roads to truth in its scripture. But Peter's architectural model envisioned these men as leaders of equal merit. God, the voice that speaks from the cloud, clearly differentiates between the three, calling Jesus alone "Beloved Son." The paths of law and prophecy both lead at last to Jesus.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis 12:1-4a; 2 Timothy 1:8b-10; Matthew 17:1-9 (25). *"If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."*

Monday, Mar 02, 2026

This, too, is almsgiving

The word *alms* literally means mercy, so we might think of our charitable giving as mercy in action. We give relief to the poor without conditions: Not because they have earned it, but simply because they need it and we have it. As Dorothy Day used to say, we cannot discriminate between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. In the same way, we are called upon to forgive those who cause offense or injury to us. We don't forgive others because they have made themselves worthy of forgiveness, but simply because they need it. And once again, we are the ones who "have" forgiveness to give, because we have been shown mercy first by the God of mercy.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Daniel 9:4b-10; Luke 6:36-38 (230). *"Forgive and you will be forgiven."*

Tuesday, Mar 03, 2026

You've got this!

It's not hard when you're a parent to inflict authority on your children—and it can be the same with bosses, principals, pastors, and others in leadership roles. We don't mean to do it; it just sort of happens. It's the model for "being in charge" that we inherited. The problem is that it doesn't seem to work. What if we turned it around and served the goodness that is already in our kids and others entrusted to our care? Praise for the good things people do is a more powerful tool than criticism. "Kind words can be short and easy to speak," says Saint Mother Teresa, "but their echoes are truly endless." A good discipline for Lent might be to lay off the tsking and scolding and concentrate on encouragement.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Isaiah 1:10, 16-20; Matthew 23:1-12 (231). *"The greatest among you must be your servant."*

Wednesday, Mar 04, 2026

The lowly path to greatness

The mother of the apostles James and John doted on her sons and demanded the best for them, the way most parents would. Yet she soon learns that sharing the glory of Jesus means sharing his sacrifice as well. We are not to "be served but to serve," Jesus tells his disciples; not to grab for the brass ring but for the polishing

cloth of a slave. Service and humility pave the path to greatness. "For leadership there is only one road: service," says Pope Francis, "There is no other way." A lesson we'd do well to remember and to pass along to the next generation.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Jeremiah 18:18-20; Matthew 20:17-28 (232). *"Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your kingdom."*

Thursday, Mar 05, 2026

Do more with less

Common Lenten practices include donations to the poor (which coincides nicely with spring cleaning) or service to those in need. In either case, if you're debating on what to give away or just what you should do, consider this compelling insight from Saint Basil the Great: "The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry; the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the naked; the shoes which you do not wear are the shoes of one who is barefoot; the money that you keep locked away and do not need is the money of the poor; the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit." Time to clean out those closets.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Luke 16:19-31 (233). *"There was a rich man lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus."*

Friday, Mar 06, 2026

Get the message

Many times in scripture we hear of messengers being mistreated—beaten and killed or, in the case of Joseph, sold into slavery by his brothers. What is it about messengers that we are afraid of? It's true that sometimes the message they carry is painful—at first. Yet the truth always has the potential to set us free. As these readings reveal, all types of people can be messengers. This Lent, be aware of the many messengers you encounter in the course of a day. Can you be open to their message, no matter how uncomfortable initially? Remember the words of Nelson Mandela: "The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46 (234). *"The Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."*

Saturday, Mar 07, 2026

Don't answer pain with pain

One of the hardest things our faith asks us to do is forgive others, especially when they have really hurt us. Shouldn't I be angry, hold a grudge, and maybe even retaliate? Isn't that what the person who hurt me deserves? Isn't that what our current culture promotes? But Jesus calls us to love our enemies, to pray for those who persecute us. He's not asking us to be doormats, but he is asking us to stop the spiral of damage one hurt can cause when we return pain for pain. Why? Because God forgives us. How can we refuse to let go of a hurt when God has let go of so many hurtful things we have done? Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, we pray.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Micah 7:14-15, 18-20; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (235). *"The Lord is kind and merciful."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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