

Sunday, Mar 15, 2026

Believe what you see

Did you ever go looking for your glasses when they were sitting right on top of your head? Or search everywhere for your car keys when they were lying on the table where you left them? There are times when we can look directly at something and not see it because we can't believe it's there. Take Jesus, for instance. We say we look for him and can't find him. Yet the Bible says he is "near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (Romans 10:8). Christ is in you, wrapped up in your humanity. There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God you have in Jesus Christ. Seeing may be believing, but in this case believing is seeing.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41 (31). *"Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, the one speaking with you is he.'"*

Monday, Mar 16, 2026

Scrap your plans

"Hear our prayer" is a common response to the Prayers of the Faithful. Though you may go to God humbly, sometimes you have a pretty good idea of what you want God to do; all that's needed is for God to set your plan in motion. Yet faith requires not a well-thought-out solution but a willingness to give yourself over to God. "Surrender without reservation to the Lord who has called us," says Saint Benedicta of the Cross. "This is required of us so that the face of the earth may be renewed." Who wouldn't want to experience such global renewal? Let your faith open you to glories you never dreamed of.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54 (244). *"He went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death."*

Tuesday, Mar 17, 2026

Commit to being healed

Jesus posed an intriguing question to one man who had been ailing for 38 years: Do you want to be well? It appears as though the answer would be obvious. So why does Jesus even bother to ask before healing him? Perhaps because he knew how often we find it difficult to leave our own suffering. We cling to our suffering because we have grown so comfortable in it. Ailments can explain all our insufficiencies before God. But what would we cling to when those ailments have been cured? Muster the courage to commit to true health, and say yes to an offer to be healed.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16 (245). *"Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, 'Do you want to be well?'"*

Wednesday, Mar 18, 2026

Building spiritual muscle memory

Catholics give up all kinds of things for Lent: cookies, drinking, cussing, not to mention meat on Fridays. They also try to find time for prayer and charitable works. Why do we do it? What purpose do these small, penitential acts serve? As dietary measures the impact on the scales is slight, and as behavioral correctives they don't always "take" beyond the 40 days. The main benefit, then, is

strength training for the will. We have to learn to say no to the self, so that when it comes time to say yes to God, we'll be ready.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-30 (246). *"I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me."*

Thursday, Mar 19, 2026

Getting past polarization

A righteous man follows the laws of his religion yet allows mercy to guide his actions. That is why Joseph decided to divorce Mary quietly, so that she might avoid the harsh penalty for what seemed to be her infidelity. But true righteousness—God's righteousness—goes beyond religious law and draws on the dictates of a well-formed conscience to discern a deeper response. This "third way" of compassion makes room for the mysterious work of God to bring forth fulfillment. Trusting this call, Joseph came to believe that God wanted him to welcome Mary into his home, and so took a courageous risk. His decision changed the course of history. In our polarized world, perhaps Joseph's discerning spirit can inspire us to break free from our rigid either/or thinking and choose the path of compassion.

SOLEMNITY OF JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a (543). *"Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly."*

Friday, Mar 20, 2026

Add depth to your days

Are you feeling a time crunch in your life? Many Americans report that they do, especially families with school-aged children. None of us can add breadth to the span of time available to us, but we can add depth to it by living more consciously aware of the grace of each moment. In the gospels this Lent we will hear how Jesus was keenly aware that "his hour" was drawing near. This is the hour of the greatest possible depth, when he freely gave his life so that faith could overcome fear, holiness could overcome sin, and life could triumph over death. We, too, will live more fully when, like Jesus, we realize we are sustained in every hour by the love of God.

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30 (248). *"No one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come."*

Saturday, Mar 21, 2026

A question of justice

Justice doesn't come easy for most of us. That's why Moses and company felt compelled to lay down the law, which continues to shape our modern understanding of justice. Consider the question Nicodemus poses in today's gospel: "Does our law condemn a man before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?" Our updated version of that is: One is innocent until proven guilty. How often we fall short of this precept. Think of detainees at refugee and detention camps who languish while waiting to be processed, those inadequately defended who now sit on Death Row, or the people you meet every day whom you subject to snap judgments. Let's each resolve, yet again, to act justly and work for justice.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53 (249). *"Does our law condemn a man before it first hears him?"*

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



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