



	PSALM	OLD TESTAMENT	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Ash Wed Feb 18	am: 95, 32, 143 pm: 102, 130	Amos 5:6-15	Heb 12:1-14	Luke 18:9-14

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** Ash Wednesday marks the official beginning of Lent, the 40-day penitential season that prepares Christians for Holy Week and Easter. Historically, the Lenten fast originally started on the first Sunday of Lent, but because Sundays were considered “feasts” and therefore exempt from fasting, the period would have been only thirty-six days long. To preserve the traditional forty-day length (excluding the six Sundays), Pope Gregory VII moved the start of the observance forward by four days, establishing Ash Wednesday as the opening day of Lent, and from this day forward, we believers are invited to:

1. **Clear the heart and mind** of anything that hinders a deeper relationship with God.
2. **Engage in intentional prayer**, listening for God’s voice in the Scriptures and in silence.
3. **Observe fasting** as a discipline that sharpens spiritual focus and solidarity with the needy.
4. **Commit to concrete acts of charity**, allowing faith to be lived out in service to others.

Ash Wednesday thus opens a sacred pilgrimage of self-examination and transformation, inviting each participant to enter the Lenten season with purpose, reverence, and a willingness to be reshaped by God’s grace.

**MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** As we approach the altar on Ash Wednesday and receive the sign of the cross with ash from the Palms placed upon our foreheads, we are reminded of two truths that echo through the words of the prophet Amos:

1. **Our mortality** – “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” The ashes mark the fleeting nature of our earthly lives, just as Amos warns that the pride of Israel will bring it low if it turns away from God.
2. **Our call to repentance** – The ash is not merely a symbol of death but also of renewal. In Amos, God urges the people to “seek the Lord and live.” He does not speak of a distant future judgment alone; He invites a present turning back to righteousness

The ashes we receive today are but a physical sign pointing to the spiritual call Amos gave Israel—to seek God, practice true justice, and abandon empty religiosity. Let this reminder guide your Lenten journey, shaping each day into a step toward deeper obedience and renewed love.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Lord, as we begin the discipline of the Lenten Journey, make us holy through these holy disciplines and help us to avoid evil and temptation. Grant this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** *"Ash Wednesday is full of joy... The sources of all sorrow are the illusion that of ourselves we are anything but dust."* – Thomas Merton.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** – Keep a Solemn or Simple Fast, using the money for the Mite Box and the time spent eating to ponder the countless throngs suffering in Sudan and South Sudan.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** - *Take These Ashes" by Sarah Hart*

<https://youtu.be/W1F9nx0mhyA?si=0NQdEazfFDxMyuwH>

<b>Thurs Feb 19</b>	am: 37:1-18 pm: 37:19-42	Hab 3:1-18	Phil 3:12-21	Lk 9:22-25
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**THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY** - *St. Odran, First Christian Martyr of Ireland, 452*

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** St. Odran is the first Christian martyr from Ireland—he was killed when an assassin mistook him for Saint Patrick. Patrick’s evangelization of the pagans of Ireland upset the traditional roles of druid priests, who were allied with clan chiefs. Patrick faced fierce opposition, and some threatened his life.

Odran was Patrick’s chariot driver, and he once overheard a plan to kill Patrick. He convinced Patrick to trade places with him in the chariot. Patrick agreed, and before they had travelled very far, a spear intended for Patrick struck Odran and killed him.

Without Odran’s selflessness, St. Patrick would never have completed his work in Ireland.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** The Gospel reading that day came from Luke 9:22-25. Jesus spoke plainly: *"The Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, and die, and on the third day rise again. If anyone wishes to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. Whoever tries to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. What good is it to gain the whole world and lose one’s soul?"* The words cut deep, exposing the paradox at the heart of discipleship—true life is found only in surrender. Like St. Odran centuries ago, at times one must stand in difficult places as a person of faith for the sake of the Gospel's conviction.

We must make a choice. This choice is between self-denial, which is initially seen by us as a hardship, versus the call God gives to us to make it a lifestyle. God asks us to give up our lives to him daily, not just during Lent. He asks us to continue to choose to find him and become closer to him in order to spend eternal life with him and witness that promise to the world.

Lent is the time to name what the obstacles are in our lives that are sinful, unhealthy, and self-centered. The essential choice this season is a "change of heart" from the circumstances, attitudes, and other behaviors that contribute to my living outside the bounds of grace in Christ Jesus.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Eternal Father, who called Saint Odran to lay down his life that the Gospel might flourish in Ireland, grant to all who honor his witness the grace to deny themselves, to take up their own crosses, and to follow your Son with steadfast love. May Odran's sacrifice inspire us to seek justice, to protect the vulnerable, and to proclaim the Good News even when it costs us dearly. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns forever, Amen.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** "For though I am bound for the name of Christ, I am not yet perfect in Jesus Christ. For now, I begin to be a disciple, and I speak to you as fellow disciples with me. For it was needful for me to have been stirred up by you in faith, exhortation, patience, and long-suffering". – *St. Ignatius of Antioch*

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** – Rise early this day and consider practicing *Lectio Divina* on today's lessons as a new discipline for your spiritual Journey. It allows one to set the day's rhythm around hearing God's voice rather than merely reciting prayers; the reflective reading invites genuine encounter with the divine. Go to <https://www.soulshpherd.org/lectio-divina-guides>

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – *Lay It All Down by United Pursuit*  
<https://youtu.be/RNacm6zR8eU>

<b>Fri Feb 20</b>	am: 95, 31 pm: 35	Eze 18:1-4, 25-32	Phil 4:1-9	John 17:9-19
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#### **FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY**

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** *St. Leo of Catania, Bishop ( 789)*

Saint Leo was bishop of the city of Catania, in Sicily. He was famed for his benevolence and charity, and his Christian love for the poor and the vagrant. The Lord granted him the gifts of healing various illnesses. He was especially steadfast in defending the faith against the paganism and sorcery still prevalent in those regions.

*On the Fridays of Lent, it is customary (in the Church of the East and West) to abstain from meat as a sign of our common penance. It represents our efforts to abstain from - do without - so many other patterns that get in the way of our happiness and wholeness. Sacrifice and doing without are worthy thoughts to ponder when one considers the life and witness of the saint remembered this week.*

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** The Old Testament reading for today from Ezekiel opens with a stark declaration: "*The soul that sins shall die.*" In verses 1-4, God rebukes the notion that children inherit the guilt of their parents, insisting that each one of us is accountable for

our own choices. Later, verses 25-32 expand this principle: the wicked who turn from sin and do what is right will live, while the righteous who persist in wrongdoing will die. We are faced again with the simple truth of this season that Lent is a season to examine the ways we have chosen paths that separate us from God. Ezekiel reminds us that we cannot hide behind family, tradition, or past successes; each day, we are called to account for our actions.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “Fear not that thy life shall come to an end, but rather fear that it shall never have a beginning”. – *St. John Henry Newman*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Merciful God, who judges each soul according to its own deeds, Grant us the courage to own our choices and to turn from every way that separates us from Your love. Help us to replace selfish habits with acts of mercy, to let our fasting be a doorway to compassion, and to let our prayers be accompanied by justice toward the poor, the broken, and the forgotten. May Your word fill our hearts this Lenten season, so that we may die to sin and rise to the abundant life You offer. Through Christ our Lord, who redeems us and calls us to newness of life, we pray. Amen.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** – Mindful of the word of Ezekiel, let us use today to perhaps confess a specific sin that has lingered this year, either by omission or commission, and in making the Confession, take the step to fast from something that enables that sin (e.g., idle scrolling that fuels envy, a snack that fuels glutton. With that perspective, we can take a step to do one concrete good for someone you have hurt or for a person in need.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – *We Choose Life by Tim Mannion*

<https://youtu.be/QpuyErYxmz0>

<b>Sat Feb 21</b>	am: 30, 32 pm: 42, 43	Eze 39:21-29	Phil 4:10-20	Luke 5:27-32
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**SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY** – *Saint Eustathius, Archbishop of Antioch, 360*

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** Saint Eustathius was a 4th-century Archbishop of Antioch, renowned as a staunch defender of Nicene Orthodoxy against Arianism. As a key figure at the First Council of Nicaea in 325, he opposed the teachings of Arius, but was later deposed by Arian allies and exiled to Thrace, where he died around 337–360.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** Levi was a despised tax collector, and yet was invited to a table of fellowship with Jesus, who did not first condemn him; rather, He first extended friendship and acceptance. Is that the experience people have of us as followers of Jesus? The tenor set is very telling as it fostered a decisive call to a new way of life. Levi’s response—leaving his tax booth and following Jesus—shows that grace produces a concrete change of direction. Jesus declares that He has come “to call sinners, not the righteous.” Perhaps that is a timeless declaration that applies to more of our circumstances than we imagine.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Gracious Father, thank You for meeting me in my broken places, just as You welcomed Levi to Your table. Empower me, by the Holy Spirit, to turn away from my “tax-collector” ways and to follow You with a heart eager to serve, through Christ, who calls us from the margins into His glorious banquet, Amen.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “Our Lord summoned Matthew by speaking to him in words. By an invisible, interior impulse flooding his mind with the light of grace, he instructed him to walk in his footsteps”. – *The Venerable Bede*

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** - Call somebody who is not engaged in a community of faith and invite them to go to the Sunday liturgy with you, followed by lunch.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – *From Tax Collector to Apostle*  
<https://youtu.be/wlDHlly79Wk>

<b>Sun Feb 22</b>	am: 63, 98 pm: 103	Genesis 2:7-9 3:1-7	Rom 5:12-19	Matt 4:1-11
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### FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** Lent is a forty-day pilgrimage that leads us from the darkness of Holy Week to the light of Easter. The five Sundays that punctuate this journey are not merely “breaks” from fasting; they are intentional milestones that help us deepen our participation in the baptismal covenant.

When we were baptized, we pledged:

- To turn away from sin (renouncing the powers of darkness),
- To follow Christ (walking in his teachings), and
- To bear witness (living out the Gospel in the world).

Each Sunday of Lent revisits one of these three dimensions, reminding us that the covenant is a living reality, not a past event.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** We hear once again the familiar Gospel of the temptations—Jesus, weary from fasting, standing on the summit of the desert, confronted by the devil’s alluring offers. The Church, in its deep wisdom, has placed this dramatic episode at the very opening of Lent. Why? Because it is the perfect mirror for the inner battles each of us faces as we begin this holy season. We know the scene well, the solitude of the desert heat pressing on Jesus. In that stark landscape, Jesus is asked, “*If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread.*” He replies, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God.*” The temptation is not merely about food; it is about the very priorities that govern our lives. As we step into Lent, let us ask ourselves the same penetrating questions that the desert posed to the Savior: What am I allowing to dominate

my thoughts? Whose applause do I crave? Do I seek significance for myself or for others? BY considering these questions, we have the opportunity to reaffirm our choice of Christ over the fleeting promises of the devil. The temptations we meet may glitter with short-term gain—comfort, prestige, ease—but they never lead to the eternal prize that God has prepared for us.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Father, through our observance of Lent, help us to understand the meaning of your Son's death and resurrection, and teach us to reflect it in our lives. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “Temptations which accompany the working day will be conquered based on the morning breakthrough to God. Decisions, demanded by work, become easier and simpler where they are made not in the fear of men, but only in the sight of God. He wants to give us today the power which we need for our work”.- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE:** Spend the afternoon seeking to be released from that which has power over you through temptation. Create a list of the most pressing temptations and team up with a spiritual partner who will share with you the same, and you may hold each other accountable.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON – *A Charge to Keep Have I* by Charles Wesley - <https://youtu.be/8w-m4JlKjy4>**

<b>Mon Feb 23</b>	am: 41, 52 pm: 44	Gen 37:1-11	1 Cor 1:1-19	Mark 1:1-13
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**MONDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT – *St. Polycarp of Smyrna, Bishop and Martyr, 166***

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** In 167, persecution broke out in Smyrna. When Polycarp, who was the humble and beloved bishop, heard that his pursuers were at the door, he said, "The will of God be done," and meeting them, he begged to be left alone for a little time, which he spent in prayer for "the Catholic Church throughout the world." He was brought to Smyrna early on Holy Saturday, and, as he entered, a voice was heard from heaven, "Polycarp, be strong." When the proconsul besought him to curse Christ and go free, Polycarp answered, "Eighty-six years I have served Him, and He never did me wrong; how can I blaspheme my King and Savior?" Can we this Lent, be like St. Polycarp, and maintain our constancy in the faith by love of Jesus Christ

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** In our society, the more impressive, more famous, more influential you are, it seems the further your values and visions are from Christ. While there are exceptions, Psalm 52 does cause us today to stop and take pause on how we come across. The Psalmist asks - Why does the mighty man not need the Lord's steadfast love? The conventional wisdom of the culture is that such a person has no need for the steadfast love from God or for God because that person has himself and his wealth. He is his own love and in himself is his boast, which is of evil because self-love is turned in upon itself. The Good News is that the Lord's steadfast love "endures all the day", in all the light of day, turning the psalmist out to the Lord. The mighty man's boast is of darkness. It is the Lord's steadfast love that makes us good and full of grace. In our Lenten Journey, we must seek that humility and that grace that Saint Polycarp exemplified.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** O God, the maker of heaven and earth, you gave your venerable servant, the holy and gentle Polycarp, the boldness to confess Jesus Christ as King and Savior and the steadfastness to die for his faith: Give us grace, following his example, to share the cup of Christ and to rise to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** "Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal high priest himself, the Son of God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth and in all gentleness and in all freedom from anger and forbearance and steadfastness and patient endurance and purity;". -*Saint Polycarp*

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE -** – Read the newspaper, or watch the television news, *intentionally*. Look for stories behind stories, incidents that indicate how people may be persecuted for their faith or who are living as martyrs, and reflect on what the implications and calls to service might be for you. Share what you learn with family and friends.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON –** *Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me* by CityAlight - <https://youtu.be/hwc2d1Xt8gM>

<b>Tues Feb 24</b>	am: 45 pm: 47, 48	Gen 37:12-24	1 Cor 1:20-31	Mark 1:14-28
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**TUESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT –** *St. Matthias, Apostle, First Century*

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** February 24 marks the feast day of Saint Matthias the Apostle for Anglicans (his feast day is celebrated on May 14 in Roman Catholicism and on August 9 in Eastern Orthodoxy). Saint Matthias is unique in church history in that he is the first apostle admitted by election (casting lots) after the ascension of Jesus. Matthias was selected to replace Judas Iscariot after his apostasy and subsequent death.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** In the less from the Old Testament today, we are offered a familiar story both in the context of Scripture and sadly all too often in our daily lives. One must ponder how it is that the jealousy of Joseph’s brothers turned into such cold-hearted revenge? We are reminded in this story of some basic elements about being human, namely that when someone hurts us, when someone wounds us deeply, it’s hard to get over. It’s not like we can just snap our fingers and erase what has been done. We brood, we hurt, we remember. But if we’re not careful, the pain we feel can cause us to do things that we’ll later regret. The sad reality is that no matter how “just” we think we’re being, we have a tendency to step over the line because our feelings get in the way, and our egos get in the way.

What this text challenges us to do is to consider how we’re going to respond to the pain we feel. Joseph’s brothers threw Joseph into a pit and then sold him into slavery. They didn’t have the perspective or faith or character to respond in any remotely redemptive way, or bring Joseph along in any significant way. How blessed it would have been for them to have a relationship with this brother, but instead, they lived in constant fear of him with guilty consciences nearly to their dying day. As we ponder this story, let us consider those we have thrown into the pit in our lives and how best we can be instruments of restoration with and for them.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** O Almighty God, who into the place of the traitor Judas didst choose thy faithful servant Matthias to be of the number of the twelve Apostles: Grant that thy Church, being always preserved from false Apostles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true pastors; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “Steer to God right away; fly to him, and you will find a peaceful shelter.” – Charles H. Spurgeon.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** –Consider how well you have received opportunities to pursue new ministries in the life of the church. Are you closer to Judas's response or Matthias's? What ministries are you open to this Lent?

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – *The Highest And The Holiest Place* by Henry Alford - <https://youtu.be/qZiVA0LV1FU>

<b>Wed Feb 25</b>	am: 119:49-72 pm: 49, 53	Gen 37:25-36	1 Cor 2:1-13	Luke 11:29-32
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**WEDNESDAY LENT I** – *St. Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople, 806.*

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** Tarasius had embarked on a career in the secular administration and had attained the rank of senator, eventually becoming imperial secretary (*asekretis*) to the Emperor Constantine VI and his mother, the Empress Irene. Originally, he

embraced Iconoclasm, but later repented, resigned his post, and retired to a monastery, taking the Great Schema (monastic habit). Since he exhibited both Iconodule sympathies and the willingness to follow imperial commands when they were not contrary to the faith, he was selected as Patriarch of Constantinople by the Empress Irene in 784, even though he was a layman at the time. Nevertheless, like all educated Byzantines, he was well versed in theology, and the election of qualified laymen as bishops was not unheard of in the history of the Church. He reluctantly accepted, on condition that church unity would be restored with Rome and the oriental Patriarchs.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** In Genesis 37, we read how Joseph's brothers, jealous of his favored status, sell him into slavery. The passage ends with the grim image of Joseph being taken away, his coat of many colors torn, his dreams mocked, and his future seemingly sealed in darkness. Yet, even in the midst of betrayal, the narrative hints at a deeper purpose: "the Lord was with Joseph" (v. 28).

When disaster strikes—whether it is loss, illness, or betrayal—our first instinct is often to cling to the present pain. We ask, "Why me?" and allow bitterness to take root. In the Lenten season, we are called to step back from that immediate reaction and view suffering through an eternal lens: a moment that, in God's providence, can be transformed into growth, compassion, and deeper reliance on Him.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Lord, you walked beside Joseph in the pit, in prison, and in the palace. Teach us to see our own pits as places where your presence can dwell. Grant us the humility to surrender our resentment, the patience to wait for your timing, and the courage to turn every crisis into an opportunity for grace. May this Lenten season be a desert where, like Joseph, we emerge renewed, ready to proclaim that "what you meant for evil, God meant for good." Through Christ our suffering Savior, we pray. **Amen**

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** "To think ourselves imperfect, and others perfect---- that is happiness. That creatures recognize we are without virtue takes nothing from us, makes us no poorer; it is they who by this lose interior joy; for there is nothing sweeter than to think well of our neighbor"- Saint *Therese of Lisieux*.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** - Keep a Daily Gratitude Journal: Write down three specific blessings or things you are grateful for every day, and whenever a thought of self-pity arises, immediately replace it with a prayer of thanksgiving or a prayer for someone else in your journal.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON –** *In Christ Alone (My Hope Is Found)*  
Song by *Adrienne Camp and Geoff Moore* <https://youtu.be/rn9-UNer6Q>

Thu Feb 26	am: 50, 59, 60 pm: 19, 46	Gen 39:1-23	1 Cor 2:14-3:15	Mark 2:1-12
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**THURSDAY: LENT 1 -Saint John Calpha, Martyr 1575 –(Eastern Church)**

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** This saint was born in Galata in Constantinople. He was an architect and carpenter by profession. He offended the Turks by his wholehearted confession of the Christian faith, and they tried to force him to become a Moslem. `I shall never deny my sweet Jesus Christ, replied John heroically, *`I believe in Him, serve Him, and confess Him.'* After harsh torture, the Turks beheaded him in Constantinople on February 26th, 1575.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** We all need people who are sources of encouragement to us when the chips are down, and the lesson from Genesis in the Old Testament does just that for us on our Lenten journey. Given all that had happened to Joseph leading up to his time in Egypt He could have very easily become bitter. He could have turned away from God. He could have stewed in his own self-pit and asked why is all this happening to me?" But instead, he continued to trust in the promises of God that he knew to be true, and he continued to plod always onward with his eyes fixed on God. He stood firm and refused to be unfaithful to the Lord, no matter what the consequences.

This is what we need to understand in Lent and in life, that God is in control and that he will remain with us; we can see hard times as means of grace and use them as stepping stones to higher things. We can meet difficulties with the expectation that God is here to teach us something, and we can grab hold of the opportunity to learn from him. If instead we meet difficulty with a complaining and worrying spirit, we'll not only lose the blessings that God would have brought, but our spiritual life also suffers.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Lord, If I be cast down and trodden under the feet of men and there be no one to help me; I will find comfort by drawing nearer to Thee, oh God; and when all hope is gone and all my aspirations are dashed to pieces and my future seems bleak; I will find comfort by drawing nearer to Thee, oh God, nearer to Thee. Amen!

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** "The purpose of God's Providence is to unite, by means of right faith and spiritual love, people who have been separated by evil. To this end, the Savior also suffered for us, "in order to gather together the children of God who were scattered- Saint *Maximus the Confessor*.

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** - Like Saint John Calpha centuries ago. Christians face persecution by radical fundamentalists. Go to <https://globalchristianrelief.org/stories/15-places-where-christians-risk-everything-when-they-convert-from-islam/> to discern how you could help as part of your Lenten journey.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON – Strong Enough by Matthew West**  
<https://youtu.be/9HzvccmiEys?si=4gb4Z1SBceTGMpHE>

<b>Fri Feb 27</b>	am: 40, 54 pm: 51	Gen 40:1-23	1 Cor 3:16-23	Mark 2:13-22
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**FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT – Feast Blessed George Herbert, Priest (1633).**

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** On this day, we recall one of the great examples of the priesthood in the Anglican expression of the catholic faith. Herbert was born in Wales and educated at Cambridge. He was a Church of England clergyman from 1630 and became famous for his distinctive religious poetry. He spent the rest of his life as rector in Bemerton near Salisbury. At Bemerton, George Herbert preached and wrote poetry; helped rebuild the church out of his own funds; and cared deeply for his parishioners. He came to be known as "Holy Mr. Herbert" around the countryside in the three years before his death. Before this, he wrote: *A Priest to the Temple* (1652), a manual of practical advice to priests, bears witness to the intelligent devotion with which he undertook his duties as priest. Herbert had long been in ill health. On his deathbed, he sent the manuscript of *The Temple* to Nicholas Ferrar, asking him to publish the poems only if he thought they might do good to "any dejected poor soul."<sup>3</sup> It was published in 1633 and met with enormous popular acclaim—it had 13 printings by 1680.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** In the opening verses of the 51<sup>st</sup> Psalm appointed today, the psalmist makes a raw confession: "My sins are ever before me." The tone is not one of shameful self-condemnation but of desperate longing for God's cleansing mercy. This is the heart-of-Lent—a willingness to stand naked before the Divine, acknowledging that "all we have is dust." And who better than to remind us of that other than George Herbert, whose spirituality is a seamless blend of personal repentance and active love. He sees the "broken heart" of Psalm 51 not as an end in itself but as the catalyst for outward compassion. For Herbert, the interior conversion demanded by the psalm must overflow into deeds of mercy. Psalm 51 teaches us how to repent; George Herbert shows us why that repentance must become love in action. Let this Lent be the time we let both the inward cry and the outward response shape a new, holy rhythm of life.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Our God and King, you called your servant George Herbert from the pursuit of worldly honors to be a pastor of souls, a poet, and a priest in your temple: Give us grace, we pray, joyfully to perform the tasks you give us to do knowing that nothing is menial or common that is done for your sake; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass if he would ever reach heaven; for everyone has need to be forgiven;” -George Herbert

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** -Go to <https://www.ccel.org/h/herbert/temple/Lent.html> and reflect on the theme of Lent as George Herbert offers to us in his poetry.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – King of Glory, King of Peace by David Walker - <https://youtu.be/YlzunotHhZg>

<b>Sat Feb 28</b>	am: 55 pm: 138, 139	Gen 41:1-13	1 Cor 4:1-7	Mark 2:23-3:6
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**SATURDAY IN LENT I** – *St. John Cassian, Priest 435*

**LITURGICAL THEME FOR THE DAY:** John Cassian was a 5th-century monastic saint known for his writings on monastic life. His feast day in the Orthodox Church is February 29 (celebrated on February 28 in non-leap years). He occupies an important place among ascetic writers and theologians of the patristic age. Like Evagrius of Pontus in the East, Cassian systematized and popularized Eastern asceticism in the West. His ascetic writings had a considerable influence on the development of Western ascetic tradition. In this work, Cassian managed to combine the experience of Eastern Christian and Western Christian asceticism in the era of its development and establishment in the late 4th – early 5th century. His teaching about the order of monastic life, ascetic work, and mystical contemplation gained him enduring glory in subsequent centuries.

**BIBLICAL MEDITATION OF THE DAY:** During this season of forty days, we are invited to examine what we *hold* and how we *manage* it. Paul reminds the Corinthians—and us—that every believer is a steward, a caretaker of gifts that do not belong to us: the gospel, the grace that sustains us, the talents God has poured into our lives, and the very breath that makes us alive. The Lenten journey rests not on what we achieve, but on the faithfulness with which we use what God has given us. When we fast, pray, or give alms, we practice this humility, learning to be content with “nothing” while trusting that God supplies all. This holy season encourages us to offer our offerings—time, money, prayer—*only* to God, not to the eyes of people.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Eternal Father, turn our hearts to you. By seeking your kingdom and loving one another, may we become a people who worship you in spirit and truth. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

**ANCIENT WISDOM/PRESENT GRACE:** “We cannot better assure our eternal happiness than by living and dying in the service of the poor, in the arms of Providence, and with genuine renouncement of ourselves to follow Jesus Christ.” – St. Vincent DePaul

**LENTEN DISCIPLINE** - Pay a visit to the St. Vincent DePaul Society by either donating items or bringing a person there who would benefit from such charity.

**SONG OF THE HEART, SONG OF THE SEASON** – Wings of the Morning by Echoes and Legends - <https://youtu.be/RDq1E38M24M>