

Homily Themes

2nd Sunday in OT through Good Friday, Year A

Theme for 2nd Sun in OT through 6th Sunday in OT is: Nothing more than love and grace!
Our theme song will be in the Gather Book, #650 These alone are enough

Note: The memorial acclamation before Lent is
We proclaim your death O Lord, and profess your resurrection, until you come again.

Theme for Lent is Be Opened!
Our theme song will be in the Gather Book, #651 Open my eyes

Note: The memorial acclamation for Lent is
When we eat this bread, and drink this cup, we proclaim your death O Lord, until you come again.

Jan 17/18 2nd Sunday in OT

“To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...”
(1 Cor 1: 2)

Yes, all of us are already saints, though we may have a hard time believing it at times! We tend to think of saints as extraordinary individuals who lived a life far removed from the daily struggles, temptations and pressures of today’s world, yet God still invites us to strive for sainthood in the here and now of our everyday living. There’s no one model. There are many! Choose the model of holiness that fits your personality, spirituality and temperament and see what God can make of you! Allow God’s love and grace to be sufficient for your pilgrim journey! (This is also the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; a unity song may be appropriate in the mass.)

Liturgical Art & Environment: some pics of diverse saints

January 24/25 3rd Sunday in OT

“Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you?” (1 Cor 1: 13)

In this week of Prayer for Christian unity, we must all reflect on what we can do to help to heal the wounds of misunderstanding and divisions that have crept into the One Church of Christ. Highlighting the Ecumenism of Truth, the Ecumenism of Prayer, and the Ecumenism of Service together are three ways we can encourage others to be involved in the Ecumenical movement. Let us reflect on the love and grace we can share with our separated brothers and sisters too!

Liturgical Art & Environment: Light the Paschal Candle to symbolize our oneness in Faith.

Jan 31/ Feb 1 4th Sunday in OT

“God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.” (1 Cor 1: 27)

How do we get from point A to point B? We rely on God’s love and grace to get us there! We’re not finished creations, but in the process of becoming that which God intends us to be. And the more we have to rely on God’s love and grace to get us there, the greater witness value our lives will have for those who have yet to believe.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Foam board with A → B

Feb 7/ 8 5th Sunday in OT

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.” (Matthew 5: 14)

Light is both a particle and a wave. It’s unpredictable where a photon of light may end up! In spiritual terms, light is full of the presence of the Holy Spirit, uncontrollable and pervading every creak and crevice of our lives, even if we don’t believe in God’s existence. As people of light, we also cannot hide God’s love and grace that has been freely given to us to live our vocations and to cast God’s nets ever wider. What is holding us back from being that particle-wave light?

Liturgical Art & Environment: A lit lamp in front of the altar.

Feb 14/15 6th Sunday in OT

“If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.” (Matthew 5:29)

The point Jesus is making in much of today’s gospel by way of hyperbole, is to be a person open to the love and grace that God makes available in our lives and not to discard those blessings for some sort of sin or temptation that will fail to satisfy. What in our lives has been wounded by sin and needs healing? In what ways can I be a minister to those who cannot heal themselves?

Liturgical Art & Environment: a big eye in front of the altar

----- LENT BEGINS -----

Feb 18 Ash Wednesday

“We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” (2 Cor 5: 20)

An ambassador is an important position! He/She is selected by the leader of a country to represent the interests of the nation and to serve as an intermediary between the leaders of the foreign country and one's own. How awesome that Christ makes us his ambassadors. How awesome that the directive we've been given on behalf of Christ is to work toward reconciliation of one another with God! The best way we can start this Lenten season then is by being open to reconciling with God and one another ourselves, so that we can be ambassadors of that reconciliation to those to whom God sends us.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Picture of Rembrandt's Prodigal Son being reconciled to the Father in front of the Altar

Feb 21/ 22 1st Sunday of Lent

“Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil.” (Matthew 4: 1)

Jesus was open to going to a dangerous place--- the wilderness. He knew it was desolate and isolated. He knew his life might be at risk. But he was open to going there because he was led there by the Spirit. He was open to what the Spirit wanted to do, to prepare him for his public ministry. How open are we to the Spirit of God? How willing are we to test the authenticity of our vocations by immersing ourselves in unknown or dangerous situations simply because God calls us there?

Liturgical Art & Environment: Desert plants in front of the Altar

Feb 28/ Mar 1 2nd Sunday of Lent

“Suddenly, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him (Jesus).” (Matthew 17: 3)

Peter, James and John must have been astonished and shocked and excited at this transfiguration event ----all at the same time. And yet, if their minds and hearts had been closed to seeing Jesus in a new light, they might never have received any grace from that miraculous encounter at all. What Jesus desires is that we all remain open our whole lives to discovering more and more of who Jesus is to us and continue to cultivate a close relationship to our Redeemer given our particular spiritualities.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Transfiguration Picture in front of Altar.

March 7/8 3rd Sunday of Lent

“God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

Yes, we sometimes forget that Christ never asked us if we wanted him to forgive our sins on the cross. He never asked us to prove our worthiness or our particular political inclinations. No, he just took it upon himself to prove his love for us in paying the ultimate price---his own death---so that we might be saved. Are we open to this most holy truth? Are we open to allowing that truth to guide our own commitment to loving the Lord? The Samaritan woman at the well learns this lesson as well. And she is changed forever because of it.

Liturgical Art & Environment: buckets of water in front of the Altar.

Mar. 14/15 4th Sunday of Lent

“He put water on my eyes. Then I washed and now I see.” (John 9: 15c)

Be opened! What a wonderful experience it must have been for that blind man to finally be able to physically see with his eyes! What we learn from this story is that being opened is a process. It's not instantaneous. There are steps that have to be followed and time that we must wait. But once we are truly ready, miraculous things can happen. So we can ask ourselves....What are we closed-minded about? What do we fail to see in ourselves that needs changing? To whom are we blinded in our daily ministries that we might rather avoid than address?

Liturgical Art & Environment: eye glasses of various shapes and sizes in front of the altar

Mar. 21/ 22 5th Sunday of Lent

“Lazarus, come out!” (John 11: 43b)

With these words, Jesus raised a man dead for 4 days! With these words, Jesus proves that he is no ordinary human being. With these words, Jesus proclaims resurrection and new life and faith in his power to save! Do we ever doubt God's ability to do the miraculous? Are our hearts closed to hearing God's desire to heal and save us from our sins? Do we have any doubts about Jesus' love and care for us, as much as he cared about his own friend Lazarus?

Liturgical Art & Environment: Cave opened in front of the Altar

Mar. 28/29 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

No particular biblical passage for today.

Blame and ridicule. That's what we see from many of the actors in today's passion narrative. No openness to seeing Jesus as the King of the Jews. No openness to receiving his Word. No openness to the consideration that perhaps they were wrong about him. No, their sinfulness blocked their hearts, minds and souls from seeing Jesus for who he really is. Do we sometimes act in the same way?

Liturgical Art & Environment: red fabric resembling spilled blood, nails and a crown of thorns.

-----Sacred Triduum Begins-----

April 2 Holy Thursday

"Do you know what I have done to you?.... I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you." (John 13:12b, 15)

Are we open to serving the marginalized and the poor of society? Are we open to going where Jesus asks and serving in obscure and remote locations for his glory? Are we ready and willing to get our hands dirty and extend the nets of God's kingdom?

Liturgical Art & Environment: a chair, basins, pitchers of water, towels in front of the altar.

(In the Hall, set up an altar of repose with chairs for the adorers)

April 3 Good Friday

"Therefore let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

Being open means essentially, being open to the grace God wants to give us in order that we may be his faithful servants on this earth and lead all others to the love of the Lord. That is the best way we can commemorate the Lord's passion.

Liturgical Art & Environment: the Large Cross, laid against the front of the Altar

Easters Season follows. Please use theme Song # 758 in Gather Book, 'I send you out!' starting on the Easter Vigil throughout the Easter Season.