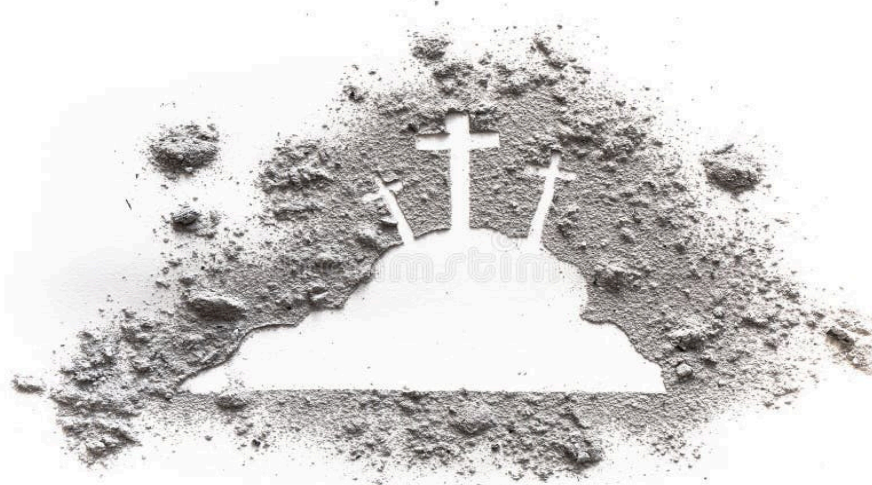


Newman University 2025 Lenten Series Reflections



Lent is a liturgical season in the Christian calendar that asks us to be more attentive to our relationship with Jesus. We are invited to pray more, to fast and to give ourselves in service with and to others.

We offer these reflections as one contribution to deepening your prayer time during Lent.

March 5 Ash Wednesday Joel 2:12 - 18; 2 Cor 5:20 - 6:2; Matthew 6:1 - 6, 16 - 18

As we come forward to receive ashes this day, may we do so with humility and awareness. We are asked to remember that we come before God as our whole selves, including our strengths, weaknesses, goodness, and sinfulness. St. Paul reminds us that we are ambassadors for Christ, called to use all our gifts and challenges in service of Christ. To share the message of Christ with the world, each of us is to be **bold** in the declaration of our redemption. This Lent, can we strive to balance the awareness of our own faults with the call to bring the redeeming love of our Savior to a world in need?

Sister Angela Laquet ASC

March 6 Thursday after Ash Wednesday Deuteronomy 30:15 - 20; Luke 9:22 - 25

We have been set up for a life that is full of goodness. Lent reminds me that life is not solely what we experience on earth, but rather life is an eternity that commenced at the beginning of time. All of life has been ordained by God. The fall of Adam and Eve happened and Jesus saved all of us. God allows our hardships to lead us closer to Him. A good life isn't necessarily one full of pleasure. A good life is one that is in communion with God in whom gratitude and trust are abundant.

Isabel Porres, Student

March 7 Friday after Ash Wednesday Isaiah 58:1 - 9; Matthew 9:14 - 15

Our heavenly Father values unwavering mercy, immeasurable grace, and agape love. Genuine fasting partakes in one of the fruits of the Spirit, selfless kindness. Fasting also directs us to a true relationship with God. When we strive for righteousness, we get a glimpse of God's guidance, irrefutable healing, and glorious presence.

Jesus compares Himself and the disciples as the bridegroom and wedding guests. A wedding is a time of joy, not mourning. Likewise, Jesus' presence on earth was a time of celebration because He was bringing the Kingdom of God. Jesus says that the bridegroom will be taken away, referring to His future suffering, death, and departure. After Jesus' resurrection, His followers will fast, symbolizing longing for Jesus' return and dependence on God.

Karen Wilson, Senior Accountant

March 8 Saturday after Ash Wednesday Isaiah 58:9 - 14; Luke 5:27 - 32

When we follow the will of God and keep holy the Sabbath, Isaiah assures us God will answer our cries for assistance. God knows our hearts and pours out His grace accordingly. If we are insincere, God will not answer our petitions. Luke also describes Jesus as knowing the heart of Levi the tax collector (later Matthew) who accepted the invitation from Jesus to follow Him. This showed the Pharisees the importance of hospitality to all who need spiritual healing. The Church is a hospital for sinners as we prepare for the celebration of Jesus' passion, death and Resurrection.

Michael Sean Boston, '84

March 9 First Sunday of Lent Deuteronomy 26:4 - 11; Romans 10:8 - 13; Luke 4:1 - 13
“ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”

Where will you be led on this First Sunday of Lent?

Deuteronomy recalls and proclaims the leading hand of God as the nation journeyed toward the Promised Land. This journey was not easy and lasted 40 years. During this time, the Hebrews learned to become a nation trusting in God. Jesus is led by the same Spirit into the desert, where he spent 40 days in prayer and fasting. This time of prayer and fasting strengthens Jesus for the challenges ahead.

The words of St. Paul do not seem to connect with these two other readings at first. After more reflection, the quote, “the word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” challenges me to take time to listen to the Spirit's voice as it echoes in my heart, to find those quiet moments to truly listen to where the Spirit is leading me.

As we begin these 40 days are we willing to take the first step to enter those quiet moments and listen with a heart willing to let the Spirit lead us?

Sister Frances Pytlik ASC, '70

March 10 Monday, First Week of Lent Leviticus 19:1 - 2, 11 - 18; Matthew 25:31- 46

In this “Little Apocalypse,” Jesus preaches about what to expect in the Final Judgment. Matthew states, “And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.’” This Lenten season we should take extra time to consider: Who are the least among us? From whom do we ignore or withhold our love, but shouldn't? Consider not only the poor, sick, and needy, but those who you struggle with in your daily life. Care for them as you would Jesus.

Dylan Sykes, Student

March 11 Tuesday, First Week of Lent Isaiah 55:10 - 11; Matthew 6:7 - 15

In Mathew, the Son of God teaches us to pray. I love this simple prayer, ending as it does with the promise that “as you forgive, so you will be forgiven.” By nature, I am not forgiving, yet in life I have experienced nothing more powerful than forgiving and being forgiven. What a mystery is God’s forgiveness - abundant, ever increasing, spacious, never judging, so different from the painful, transactional relationships of this world - shrunken as they are, with their meritocracies, rewards and punishments, and *quid pro quos*. God’s forgiveness, in contrast, is free, unmerited, and unearned, and just as God forgives us, we can forgive others!

Marguerite Regan, Director, Center for Teaching & Learning

March 12 Wednesday, First Week of Lent Jonah 3:1 - 10; Luke 11:29 - 32

Jonah, whose name means *dove*, is a fitting prophet, a fitting messenger for the first week of Lent. Our Lord says the sign to be given to a generation who seeks signs is that of Jonah. Jonah proclaimed the sentence, and the people of Nineveh, convicted in their hearts of the crime, repented. So too, it is the Holy Spirit, who descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, that convicts us of our sin (Jn 16:8); for the Spirit whispers to the heart (1 Kgs 19:12) that it might turn to the water flowing from Christ.

A Seminarian for the Diocese of Wichita

March 13 Thursday, First Week of Lent Esther 14:1, 3 - 5, 12 - 15; Matthew 7:7 - 12

Matthew tells us very clearly that the Lord is aware of all our needs and desires. If humans, as wicked as they are, can provide for their children, how much more will the Lord provide for those He loves unconditionally? God is aware of our necessities and desires to fulfill them. So must we be aware of our neighbor’s needs and know that we must care for each other as God cares for us. Let our reflections and actions help those who are still seeking, and our answers be a guide to the helpless.

Prisca Bahati, Student

March 14 Friday, First Week of Lent Ezechiel 18:21 - 28; Matthew 5:20 - 26

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus provides a deeper meaning of the Sixth Commandment, “You shall not kill.” Jesus says “whoever is angry with his brother” will be liable to judgment, and He warns against name-calling. In our daily lives, it is sometimes easy to act quickly with anger or derogatory comments towards others. Jesus encourages us to “be reconciled with your brother (and sister)” and to “settle with your opponent quickly.”

During this Lenten season, in what ways can we act with peace, rather than anger? How can we seek reconciliation with our friends, relatives, fellow students or co-workers?

Matthew Schippers, Board of Trustees Member

March 15 Saturday, First Week of Lent Deuteronomy 26:16 - 19; Matthew 5:43 - 48

During this time of Lent, the Lord strongly asks us to commit and immerse ourselves to walk with Him. This is a time of cleansing, a time to repent and renew myself. Though I can do this any time, Lent is special because Jesus is with me in my desert. He understands my temptations. God promises that I can start new by living these words, "I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" I believe Jesus taught me this lesson when he said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they do." This is exactly what God asks of us - to love, forgive, and pray for our enemies after they have caused us so much hurt and damage. A hard thing to do!

I don't lose anything by allowing myself to be willing to forgive, but I risk losing much, if not everything, by not being willing to forgive. Time and prayer with Jesus in the desert will heal wounds, help me to love my enemies and pray for my persecutors.

Brenda Whitely, Admissions Office Assistant