

Lenten Meditations

Fifth Week of Lent

March 18 – March 24

Emphasis: Grace

As we move toward the end of Lent, it is good for us to reflect on the grace of God in our lives. Some of our scriptures this week seek to see God's grace through the power of renewal and transformation. Other scriptures speak of the fact that God's grace is a gift, given to us because of who God is rather than who we are. The final passage for the week reminds us of how God's grace can empower us to be honest with our lives rather than to live our life in self-righteousness.

Prayer for the Week

"Our glory and our hope – We are the Body of Christ. Christ loves us and espouses us as His own flesh. Isn't that enough for us? But we do not really believe it. No! Be content, be content. We are the Body of Christ. We have found Him, He has found us. We are in Him, He is in us. There is nothing further to look for, except for the deepening of this life we already possess. Be content. (Thomas Merton)

Prayer Practice: The Release Prayer

The prayer of release is simply a prayer of letting go. The act of letting go of burdens or destructive thoughts in our life is a continuous act. It is done because we serve one who wishes to take the burdens that so weigh us down. The act of release is sort of a recognition of a necessary death, a giving up of that which we do not need to carry. In doing this we also then allow God's Spirit to bring something new into our lives. We will concentrate this week on two kinds of release: releasing our burdens, and releasing our concern for others.

Finding yourself in the place of prayer and establishing a comfortable physical position, we begin our prayer with an awareness of God's presence. In that presence let us picture Jesus coming to us and asking us to let go of that which we do not need to hold on to. He assures us that he is strong enough to take our burdens and concerns, he reminds us that we are not living a life of abundance when we hold on to that which is not life giving.

Daily Scripture Readings

March 18 (Sunday)

Isaiah 1:2-20

March 19 (Monday)

John 8:1-11

March 20 (Tuesday)

Jeremiah 31:31-34

March 21 (Wednesday)

Ezekiel 37:1-14

March 22 (Thursday)

Ephesians 4:25-5:1

March 23 (Friday)

Romans 5:1-11

March 24 (Saturday)

Luke 18:9-14

Reflective Questions for the Week

1. How have you experienced God's grace in your life?
2. How do you see the relationship between God's grace and your life's response to that grace?
3. As we move to the edge of Holy Week, how do you understand the suffering that Jesus will undergo as grace in your life?