



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

SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2008

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Seeing with the eyes of faith

Did you ever go looking for your glasses when they were sitting right on top of your head? Or search all over the house for your car keys when they were lying on the kitchen table, right where you left them? There are times when we can look right at something and not see it because we don'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). If you are born of a woman, Christ is in you, wrapped up in your humanity. And 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.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41*

"Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, the one speaking with you is he.'"

MONDAY, MARCH 3 FEAST OF KATHARINE DREXEL, VIRGIN

Do-it-yourself faith

Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) was a wealthy young American who became concerned about the plight of African Americans and Native Americans after reading a book called *A Century of Dishonor* by Helen Hunt Jackson. She was moved to donate vast sums of money to their cause. Years later during an audience with Pope Leo XIII, Katharine asked him to send missionaries to aid the Indians in the missions she was financing. The pope responded by saying, "Why don't you become a missionary yourself?" So she did. Katharine spent the rest of her life and her fortune establishing schools and missions for blacks and Native Americans. Is there something we are waiting for someone else to do that we should be doing ourselves?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54*

"The man with the sick boy believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way."

TUESDAY, MARCH 4 FEAST OF CASIMIR

Knowing the source of our healing

Imagine Prince Harry of Great Britain—handsome, young, royal—turning his back on national expectations and even those of his grandmother the queen, rejecting trappings, even girlfriends and a suitable spouse, all so that he could lead an austere and studious life focused on the King of kings. Such was Saint Casimir, second son of the king of Austria, who died at 23 and soon after became patron of both Poland and Lithuania. One wonders if Casimir consciously patterned himself on Jesus' frequent defiance of those who upheld the absolute demands of the Jewish Law? It's a good day to consider how often we too easily go along with everyone else's expectations and for what reasons, or for whom, we might just buck the tide.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16*

"The religious leaders began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a Sabbath."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5 LENTEN WEEKDAY

Put off procrastination

Spiritual author John Shea has authored books of poetry titled *The Hour of the Unexpected* and *The God Who Fell from Heaven*. One of his favorite themes is the sudden ways in which the divine can "break into" our everyday lives, often at the most unexpected

moments. Jesus makes it clear that the "hour of the unexpected" not only is coming but has already arrived. Are you ready? If Jesus walked up to you on the street or rang your doorbell, would you be ready to meet him? Would you even recognize him? Can you be sure he hasn't already approached you today? We do well to prepare every day to meet the Lord. He is always waiting for us to recognize his presence in everyone we meet.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-30*

"Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here . . ."

THURSDAY, MARCH 6 LENTEN WEEKDAY

Moses and Jesus: On the same page?

Moses and Jesus have a few things in common. Both have been called saviors and liberators. Moses is the giant of Hebrew scripture, and Jesus is the center of Christian scripture. Moses, in the 13th century B.C., never mentions Jesus, but certainly the reverse is true: Moses comes up in the New Testament at least 80 times, 60 times in John's gospel alone. John even notes that Jesus told his Jewish audience that if they failed to recognize him, it was because they misread Moses. Check out Deuteronomy 18:15-19: Is Jesus the kind of prophet Moses had in mind?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 32:7-14; John 5:31-47*

"If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe in what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

FRIDAY, MARCH 7

FEAST OF PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS; WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Happy coincidence

The fact that the memorial of saints Perpetua and Felicity this year happens to fall on the World Day of Prayer helps us bring to mind the prayerful presence of women throughout Christian history. Treated cruelly in a Roman prison before being put to death, Perpetua and Felicity are remembered for their prayerful presence and patience in hardship. So impressed was their jailer, Pudens, that he became a Christian, too. World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. Spiritual women, then and now, can inspire us to pray daily.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30*

"Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill?"

SATURDAY, MARCH 8 LENTEN WEEKDAY

Take a stand, pay the price

Nicodemus is sometimes known as the "stealth disciple" for only coming to Jesus at night. Being a member of the ruling Sanhedrin by day, associating with a rabbi under surveillance might have been harmful to him professionally. But there came a time when Nicodemus couldn't compartmentalize his loyalties any longer. The chief priests and Pharisees were prepared to condemn Jesus, an act that seemed illegal and even immoral to Nicodemus. Sometimes we keep our own discipleship discreetly under wraps. When our loyalties are divided, will we raise our voices or remain stealth disciples?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53*

"Nicodemus asked, 'Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing, does it?'"

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Scripture quotes come from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

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