

## Sunday, March 25, 2007

### Scripture:

O my people!  
I will put my spirit in you that you may live,  
and I will settle you upon your land;  
thus you shall know that I am the LORD.  
I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

Ezekiel 37:13-14

### Quote:

The Church continues to speak to all people and all nations, for it is only in the name of the Christ that salvation is given to men and women. Salvation . . . permeates this world in the realities of the economy and labor, of technology and communications, of society and politics, of the international community and the relations among cultures and peoples.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace,  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, # 1

### Reflection:

Christ came to give us life; he wants us to be fully human and to know the abundance of grace in all the aspects of life in community with others. The salvation He offers is not separate from our life in this world. Our salvation depends on embracing the Spirit and playing our creative role in shaping the economic, social and cultural life of the global community.



### Prayer:

We, your people, long for life, O Lord.  
We long to know your promise  
through the fullness of being.  
We long for a life lived in awareness of the  
sacredness of all aspects of your Creation.  
Lord, help us to embrace  
the Spirit you send into this world  
and to make the Spirit visible in the world.

### Fasting:

- Fast from putting off thoughts about your salvation and remember that the Church calls us to know salvation permeates this world in every aspect of social and economic life. Fully embrace the life Christ offers us and live as He calls us to live in the daily complexity of modern life.

### Almsgiving:

Explore the website, The Ezekiel Project sponsored by the youth ministry office of the Diocese of Northampton, England, and learn how these youth connect salvation, prayer and witness to make a difference, modeled after the prophet who talked about hope.

#### Website:

The Ezekiel Project

#### Address:

<http://www.ezekielproject.com/homepage.asp>

## Monday, March 26, 2007

### Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord

#### Scripture:

Sacrifice or oblation you wished not,  
but ears open to obedience you gave me.  
Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;  
then said I, "Behold I come."  
"In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,  
To do your will, O my God, is my delight,  
and your law is within my heart!"

I announced your justice in the vast assembly;  
I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.  
Your justice I kept not hid within my heart;  
your faithfulness and your salvation I have spoken of;  
I have made no secret of your kindness and your truth  
in the vast assembly.  
Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Psalm 40:7-11

#### Quote:

By means of her social doctrine, the Church takes on the task of proclaiming what the Lord has entrusted to her. She makes the message of the freedom and redemption wrought by Christ, the Gospel of the Kingdom, present in human history.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace,  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, # 63

#### Reflection:

The social doctrine of our Church is a rich gift to us, a gift that challenges us but also brings us joy, the delight spoken of in Psalm 40. In God's kindness, God gives us the beauty of the message of justice and human dignity, freedom and redemption. During these last weeks of Lent, prepare for the the reaffirmation of this message on Easter and during the Easter season. Keep minds and hearts open and attentive to God's word and to God's world.



#### Prayer:

Here we are, Lord,  
ready to do your will,  
to listen attentively  
to the message of justice  
and to take delight in your teachings.  
Give us a taste of your joy  
so we in turn can share the Good News.  
May we help embody it  
in our period of human history.

#### Fasting:

- Fast from being closed from the delight and joy of hearing and responding to the proclamation of justice for all. Remember that the point of Lent is the movement to the Light of Easter.

#### Almsgiving:

In honor of today's feast, learn about the work of Annunciation House on the U.S./Mexico border. Annunciation House is a Catholic organization that accompanies the migrant, homeless, and economically vulnerable peoples of the border region through hospitality, advocacy, and education.

#### Website:

Annunciation House

#### Address:

<http://www.annunciationhouse.org/bae.html>

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

**Scripture:**

The nations shall revere your name, O LORD,  
and all the kings of the earth your glory,  
When the LORD has rebuilt Zion  
and appeared in his glory;  
When he has regarded the prayer of the destitute,  
and not despised their prayer.  
Let this be written for the generation to come,  
and let his future creatures praise the LORD:  
“The LORD looked down from his holy height,  
from heaven he beheld the earth,  
To hear the groaning of the prisoners,  
to release those doomed to die.

Psalm 102: 16-21

**Quote:**

As the Gospel reverberating by means of the Church in the today of men and women, the Church’s social doctrine is a word that brings freedom... Evangelizing the social sector means infusing into the human heart the power of meaning and freedom found in the Gospel, in order to promote a society more human because it is in greater conformity with the Kingdom of God.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace,  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, #63

**Reflection:**

Freedom is the gift we are given through the sacrifice of Christ, and freedom is the gift we are called to pass on, though the work of compassion and social justice. To be fully human is to internalize the liberation we are offered though the events of Holy Week and Easter, so we can be fully present to the problems in human society, without fear or despair, and so we can respond with discernment and hope, co-creating a society that is deeply human.



**Prayer:**

Lord of liberty,  
we hunger for the freedom you call us to.  
Do not despise our prayers;  
release us from the prison  
of our own interests, our own fears.  
May the Gospel be echoed by our voices  
and reverberate in our actions.  
May we work in freedom  
to build the Kingdom of God.

**Fasting:**

- Fast from enslavement to fear, from enslavement to despair and enslavement to a consumer society. Enjoy the freedom to love our neighbors with compassion, to have hope, and to work for a common good that contributes to a more human world in conformity to the Kingdom God calls us to.

**Almsgiving:**

Today, across the world, a new form of slavery is emerging globally in the form of trafficking in human persons. Learn about the issue, the Church’s commitment to put a stop to it, and the work of the Catholic Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

**Website:**

USCCB Migration & Refugee Services

**Address:**

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/traffickingweb.shtml>

## Wednesday, March 28, 2007

### Scripture:

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

(Daniel 3:16-18)

### Quote:

The persistence of poverty in a nation as wealthy as ours is a deep moral failing and a social crisis that weakens our nation. From a Judeo-Christian perspective, it means that the covenant has been ruptured. Our relationship with God is not in right order, and the injustice of poverty and extreme inequality cries out for change.

Catholic Charities USA, *Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good*, 2006

### Reflection:

In contemporary Western culture we see all around us the idolatry of wealth and power, the idolatry of national security and national interests, the idolatry of the self. False gods are everywhere; they are the golden idols of this period in history. To return to a right relationship with our God, we need to recognize these false idols and to turn back to the Word. The Word of God will direct us to recognize that everyone has the right to a life of dignity and a decent lifestyle.



### Prayer:

We long to serve you, Lord, and you alone.  
Help us to hear our Church call us  
to be in right relationship to you  
and to your children.  
Give us the wisdom and courage  
to turn from false idols  
so we may embrace the common good  
and promote justice in our land.

### Fasting:

- Fast today from worshipping any person, concept or entity which is not God. Turn away from false images and turn toward the Truth we find in the Scriptures and in the teachings of the Church.

### Almsgiving:

Learn about the Catholic Church's call to become communities of Salt and Light. Read about the vision for vibrant parish outreach and witness. Reflect on the challenges presented.

#### Website:

Communities of Salt and Light

#### Address:

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/saltandlight.htm>

## Thursday, March 29, 2007

### Scripture:

Look to the LORD in his strength;  
seek to serve him constantly.  
Recall the wondrous deeds that he has wrought,  
his portents, and the judgments he has uttered.  
He remembers forever his covenant  
which he made binding for a thousand generations—  
Which he entered into with Abraham  
and by his oath to Isaac.  
The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Psalm 105: 4-5, 8-9

### Quote:

Hope in the coming kingdom is already beginning to take root in the hearts of people. The radical transformation of the world in the Paschal Mystery of the Lord gives full meaning to the efforts of people, and in particular of the young, to lessen injustice, violence and hatred and to advance all together in justice, freedom, kinship and love.

World Synod of Bishops, *Justicia in Mundo* (1971), no. 76

### Reflection:

Hope is the promise and the culmination of Lent. By choosing to give our attention to signs of hope, signs of the seeds of justice and peace in the world, we prepare ourselves to be an Easter people. With hope, we can take part in the just transformation of the world, knowing the Paschal Mystery will inspire our efforts as we move forward to build the Kingdom of God.



### Prayer:

O Lord, we look to you  
for the vision to see signs of hope  
in this struggling global community.  
We look to you for the strength  
to practise hope in our hearts  
and in the world.  
We recall the wondrous deeds you have done;  
grace us to perform the deeds of justice,  
to prepare your people for peace.

### Fasting:

- Fast from inattention to signs of hope in the world. Be intentional about looking for signs of hope all around you, in what you choose to see, in what you choose to read, an in the people around you.

### Almsgiving:

Learn about the seeds of hope being planted at a farm run by the Sisters of St. Dominic in Akron, Ohio. Their farm, Crown Point Ecology Center is becoming a nationally recognized model for combining spirituality, justice, land conservation and community learning.

#### Website:

Crown Point Ecology Center

#### Address:

<http://www.crownpt.org/>

## Friday, March 30, 2007

### Scripture:

Sing to the LORD!  
Give praise to the LORD!  
He rescues the life of the needy  
from the hands of the wicked.

Jeremiah 20:13

### Quote:

The Church, then, believes that through each of its members and its community as a whole it can help to make the human family and its history still more human.

Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), no. 40

### Reflection:

What does it mean to be fully human? In the social teaching of the Church, part of that challenge is to be continually moving into a deeper understanding of the human community in its global scope, of its systems and structures, so we will have the knowledge and skills to help develop and support the potential of all members of the human family. By helping others become more fully who they were created to be, we develop our own human potential and become more fully who God created us to be.



### Prayer:

Let us sing to the Lord and give praise by the way we live and by what we choose to learn about injustice in this world. Let us sing to the Lord and give praise by our response to those in need. Let us sing to the Lord and give praise by our commitment to develop our own humanity as we contribute to the development of all members of the human family.

### Fasting:

- Fast today from easy answers about the problems of poverty that thwart the human development of so many people.

### Almsgiving:

Take some time to begin learning about the system of Debt and the structures of Trade that need transformation in order to lessen poverty around the globe. The beginner's guide to debt can be found on the Jubilee web site.

#### Website:

Jubilee USA

#### Address:

<http://www.jubileeusa.org/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt.html>

## Saturday, March 31, 2007

### Scripture:

Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, proclaim it on distant coasts, and say: He who scattered Israel, now gathers them together, he guards them as a shepherd his flock. The LORD shall ransom Jacob, he shall redeem him from the hand of his conqueror. Shouting, they shall mount the heights of Zion, they shall come streaming to the LORD'S blessings: The grain, the wine, and the oil, the sheep and the oxen; They themselves shall be like watered gardens, never again shall they languish. Then the virgins shall make merry and dance, and young men and old as well. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will console and gladden them after their sorrows.

Jeremiah 31: 10-13

### Quote:

It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards "having" rather than "being." and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself. It is therefore necessary to create life-styles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments. In this regard, it is not a matter of the duty of charity alone, that is, the duty to give from one's "abundance," and sometimes even out of one's needs, in order to provide what is essential for the life of a poor person. I am referring to the fact that even the decision to invest in one place rather than another, in one productive sector rather than another, is always a moral and cultural choice.

Pope John Paul, II, *Centesimus Annus*, #36

### Reflection:

The quality of our lives depends on our capacity for gratitude, for joy, for beauty and truth, and for community. It is a constant challenge to emphasize being rather than having in our consumer society, for sharing rather than hoarding, and for putting people above profits. Responding to this challenge, failing in the response and beginning again--and seeking communities which will give us the support we need to live an economically moral manner--is an authentic part of our Lenten journey, especially as we move closer to the day when Life is raised above death.



### Prayer:

Grace us, God of Life,  
so we can know the joy of your abundance,  
so we can experience our "being" in joyful  
community with our sisters and brothers.

Guide us, God of Wisdom,  
so we can make discerning choices about our  
lifestyles and economic priorities.  
Grant us the moral vision to see life both as  
gift and as responsibility.

### Fasting:

- Fast from being occupied with "having" and enjoy "being" today. Appreciate the abundance you have and see ways to share, and know that sharing brings much long-lasting joy than obsessive consuming.

### Almsgiving:

Living simply is easy to do and has global ramifications. Learn about the many different ways you can make a difference in an effort to live more simply.

#### Website:

CAFOD - Live Simply

#### Address:

[http://www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/livesimply\\_worship](http://www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/livesimply_worship)

