



JUST A GUY IN THE PEW
THE NARROW ROAD.

MARCH 2022 | OBEDIENCE

*In loving memory of Bill Platten.
A leader, a mentor, a friend.*



THE NARROW ROAD

THE EVERYDAY GUIDE FOR THE EVERYDAY GUY



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WELCOME

Brothers in Christ,

I am so excited to deliver this resource to you. As I look back over the years at what God has had us doing at Just a Guy in the Pew, it has become obvious that His goal for our ministry is to help men become virtuous. Jesus didn't ask us to be merely "good" men; no He called us to be great men. In order for this to happen, we need to leave vice and selfishness behind and trade it in for virtue and selflessness. That is what will help us achieve the goal that Christ has for us all. That goal is holiness. In the words of St. Gregory of Nyssa, "The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God." What is God? He is holy and that's what we should hope to become as well.

The *Catechism* defines virtue in this way: "A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions" (CCC1803). Did you catch that? It says in order to be virtuous we need a habitual and firm disposition. This is where I think most men struggle. Most of us desire to do good. We desire to BE good. The problem is we don't have a system in place to form the necessary habits that shore up our will. Almost every man I have worked with over the years falls prey to this. We have the intention of being virtuous, but the road to hell is paved with good intentions, as they say. As men, we need structure and accountability to help us practice and live out virtue in our lives. Put pieces of wood for building a desk in front of a guy without directions or tools and the wood will soon be pushed to the side with a promise of getting to it later. Put that same wood in front of a guy with directions and a screw gun and he will build it in an hour. You see, the desire is there, we just need good directions.

That is what I hope these books can be for you every month. In them, you will be able to practice a singular virtue over 30 days in the different relationships of your life. This will help you dial your focus in on one virtue each month and will help keep you from feeling overwhelmed. Feeling overwhelmed is what makes most guys put something down. That's why we have made each day as simple as possible for you. We have even included the daily Gospel reading for you to read and reflect on what God is sharing with you personally that day. That in itself will help transform your life.

You also will have the opportunity to list out the ways in which you have practiced that month's particular virtue in the four different relationships in your life. Those are your relationship with God, your relationship with your spouse, your relationship with your children, and your relationship with your neighbor. These are the places

God wants us to grow in virtue. He uses the very people He puts in front of you each day as opportunities to grow in virtue and holiness. If you are not married and do not have children, use those two weeks to continue to grow your relationship with God and your neighbor while praying for your future spouse and children.

The last piece we have included is the Opportunity for Grace Chart. This is not a commitment sheet but is exactly what it is called. It's an opportunity for grace. It is a list made up of simple yet powerful practices you can begin to put into place in your life. These are opportunities you can seek out throughout the month to receive God's grace or pass it along to your family or others. Most guys beat themselves up for what they don't do. This is an opportunity to shine light on the progress you are making each week in your spiritual life. It's a chance to see the positive instead of the negative.

It is my hope and prayer that you will find this simple yet powerful tool helpful. I hope that you will use this book each day to help continue on the path to holiness. If your goal is to be the man that God created you to be, then this will get you going in the right direction. I look forward to walking this journey towards becoming virtuous men beside you.

**In Christ,
John**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRACE

DAY	MORNING PRAYER	THE NARROW ROAD	DAILY MASS	CONFESSION	ADORATION	TIME WITH WIFE	TIME WITH KIDS	NIGHT PRAYER/ EXAMEN	SUNDAY MASS
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									

DAY	MORNING PRAYER	THE NARROW ROAD	DAILY MASS	CONFESSION	ADORATION	TIME WITH WIFE	TIME WITH KIDS	NIGHT PRAYER/ EXAMEN	SUNDAY MASS
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									
21									
22									
23									
24									
25									
26									
27									
28									
29									
30									
31									

THE VIRTUE OF OBEDIENCE

My brothers,

If we are to truly be the people of faith we claim to be, then there is one virtue we absolutely need to possess. That is the virtue of obedience. The Catechism tells us, "By faith, man submits his intellect and his will to God" (CCC 143). The only way one can submit his will to God is by choosing to obey Him. This is the difference between those who claim to be disciples of Christ and those who actually are. Having faith means obeying all the commandments of God the Father and everything else we were taught by His Son Jesus Christ no matter how difficult it is or how much our obedience allows us to suffer. "To obey in faith, is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is truth itself" (CCC 145). Obedience in faith is our correct response to everything God has done for us.

According to the Catechism, obedience starts with our baptism. It states, "Having become a member of the church, the person belongs no longer to himself, but to him that died and rose for us" (CCC 1269). St. Paul echoes these words in Romans when he writes, "Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ" (Rom 1:4-5). This is what we must come to understand about our faith, my brothers. Once we have been baptized and we have confirmed our belief, our lives no longer belong to us but to God. This means that we begin to pursue His will instead of our own. This means shedding our own wants and selfish desires so that we can concentrate on His. This isn't just a one time thing. Obedience calls us to live in the way Christ has taught us each and every moment of our lives to the best of our ability.

What a gift the virtue of obedience is! Through it, we come to realize God's will is infinitely better for us than if we were left to our own devices. Obedience to God protects us from so many things. Just think about how many trials God may have saved you from by simply following His will instead of your own. It is almost unfathomable. Being obedient to God not only keeps us from landing in the pitfalls of our own will, but it also protects us from the will others try to impose on us. St. John Chrysostom said, "On each occasion I say: 'Lord thy will be done! It's not what this or that one says, but what you want me to do.' This is my fortress, this is my firm rock, this is my sure support." Guys, the world, the flesh, and the devil are trying each day to get you to turn away from God and towards them. It is through obedience that we remain under the loving care of a Father who wants nothing but the best for us. This month, let us turn our attention to striving to follow God's will every day. Let's find those places in our relationships and in our lives where we are still trying to do it our way.

Then, let us pray for the grace to change them. I am praying for you all as you seek to grow in the virtue of obedience this month. Please pray for me. God bless!

VIRTUE PLAN FOR THE MONTH

VIRTUE: OBEDIENCE

MOTTO:

"We must obey God rather than man."

— Acts 5:29

ROOT SINS:

Pride, Gluttony

WHERE DO I SEE THESE SINS IN MY LIFE?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PLAN TO FORM OBEDIENCE

WEEK 1: Obedience and God

WEEK 2: Obedience and My Wife

WEEK 3: Obedience and My Children

WEEK 4: Obedience and My Neighbor

PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE -ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

Jesus, Almighty King of kings,
You Who obeyed Your Father to the end,
Teach me the meaning of obedience.
My soul burns to comply to Your Will,
Striving to charm Your Divinity.
While my worldly nature seeks one way,

My spiritual nature seeks another.
Bless me with the strength to obey,
That my soul may subdue both natures,
Blending them as a fair aromatic bloom.
I always seek favor in Your eyes,
To always obey You until my last breath!

Amen

WEEK 1 REFLECTION:

OBEDIENCE AND GOD

In this month's first reflection, I shared with you why we need to be obedient to God. In this reflection I want to show you what total obedience to God looks like. Instead of the "why," we will talk about the "how." The scriptures are full of examples of people who were completely obedient to God. There are three who stick out to me the most. They are Abraham, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus. Each of these people put their own will aside and obeyed God. If we want to do the same, then their examples are a good place to start.

First, let's begin with Abraham. Abraham is referred to as the father of all who believe. He received this title because he was strong in his faith. He listened to God's will and obeyed it in everything. Hebrews 11:8 tells us that "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place in which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out not knowing where he was going." Abraham had no idea what God had planned, and he obeyed anyway. He put his own will aside. Nothing shows his obedience more than when he was asked by God to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Abraham never questioned God or cried out that it wasn't fair. Instead, he left immediately, went to the place the Lord called him to and was on the verge of killing his son when an angel cried out for him to stop. As heart wrenching as this scene is to me as a father, there is no denying that Abraham was willing to obey God no matter the cost. His son was spared because God is a loving Father. This is one of the greatest examples in the Bible of what it means to truly be obedient to God. One day God will ask you for the thing you love the most. When that day comes, the hope is for you and I to be just as obedient as Abraham in giving it to Him.

Our Blessed Mother was also a tremendous example of obedience to God. As a young girl, she was called by an angel to become the mother of the Messiah. Think about that. A young teenager on the brink of marriage is told she is to give birth to the Son of God. Think about how confusing and frightening that moment must have been. Think about how many thoughts and how much anxiety she must have felt when she responded, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" (Luke 1:34) With the weight of that proclamation and the confusion she must have felt, she still chose to obey the will of God. She chose God's will over her own when she proclaimed, "Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be done unto me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Then, she spent the rest of her life following through on her promise to God. She obeyed Him even when it would feel like her own heart was pierced during her son's passion. Mary is such an amazing example of what it means to fully obey God.

Finally, there is no greater example of what it means to obey God than Jesus Himself. Jesus spent every waking moment on this earth pursuing nothing but His Father's will. He states this very fact in John 14:30-31 when He says to His disciples, "I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming. He has no power over me, but the world must know that I love the Father and that I do just as the Father has commanded me." I get chills every time I read those verses. Jesus was God. He knew what following His Father's will was going to cost him. He knew it would be filled with rejection, abandonment, tremendous pain and torture, and an eventual slow and

brutal death. He knew He would feel every bit of it. Even in knowing all of that, He still chose to obey God. In the garden, when He was sweating blood due to fear and worry and was all alone while His friends slept, He still chose God's will. What a tremendous example this should be to us.

My brothers, how often do we choose our will over God's? How often do we choose to obey the world, the flesh, and the devil instead of our Father? How often do we complain about how hard it is to obey God's will? We have chosen to be disciples of Christ. That means that we must become like Him in every way. We have to pick up our cross and follow Him no matter how heavy and painful it is. We have to follow God's will no matter what is asked of us or what it costs us. The thing is, there was a resurrection after the crucifixion. There was joy after the suffering. There was hope. Obeying God's will isn't a punishment or a hardship. It is a blessing and a grace. My brothers, as we enter this week focusing on obedience in our relationship with God, let us embrace the words of Christ as our own. When the world, the flesh, and the devil come knocking, let us answer them with these words: "But the world must know that I love the Father and that I do just as the Father has commanded me" (John 14:31)

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 1, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

“Obedience unites us so closely to God that in a way transforms us into Him, so that we have no other will but His. If obedience is lacking, even prayer cannot be pleasing to God.”

— St. Thomas Aquinas



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MK 10:28-31

Peter began to say to him, “Lo, we have left everything and followed you.” Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first.”

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 2, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"One of the greatest graces for which I feel myself indebted to Our Lord is, that His Divine Majesty has given me the desire to be obedient; for in this virtue I find most consolation and contentment, it being that which Our Lord recommended by His own example more than any other, and on this account I desire to possess it more than anything else in the world."

— St. Teresa of Avila



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 6:1-6, 16-18

ASH WEDNESDAY

"Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. "Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

[illegible]

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 3, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Obedience is mission: "I have come into this world to do the will of my Father, who has sent me." Where there is no obedience, there is no virtue; where there is no virtue there is no good; where good is wanting, there is no love, there is no God; where God is not, there is no Heaven."

— St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 9:22-25

THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

(Jesus) saying, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." And he said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 4, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"There are three sorts of obedience; the first, obedience when a strict obligation is imposed upon us, and this is good; the second when the simple word of the superior, without any strict command, suffices for us, and this is better; the third, when a thing is done without waiting for an express command, from a knowledge that it will be pleasing to the superior, and this is the best of all."

— St. Ignatius of Loyola

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 9:14-15

FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 5, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

“Without a doubt, obedience is more meritorious than any other penance. And what greater penance can there be than keeping one’s will continually submissive and obedient?”

— St. Catherine of Bologna



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 5:27-32

SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

After this he went out, and saw a tax collector, named Levi, sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he left everything, and rose and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his house; and there was a large company of tax collectors and others sitting at table with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes murmured against his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 6, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Obedience is a virtue of so excellent a nature, that Our Lord was pleased to mark its observance upon the whole course of His life; thus He often says, He did not come to do His Own will, but that of His Heavenly Father."

— St. Francis de Sales



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 4:1-13

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit for forty days in the wilderness, tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing in those days; and when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" And the devil took him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it shall all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'" And he took him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here; for it is written, 'He will give his angels charge of you, to guard you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 1: OBEDIENCE AND GOD

MARCH 7, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"He who always acts under obedience may be assured that he will not have to give an account of his actions to God."

— St. Philip Neri



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 25:31-46

MONDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

"When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD TODAY?

WEEK 2 REFLECTION:

OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

**If you are not married and do not have children, use this week to continue to grow your relationship with God and your neighbor while praying for your future spouse and children.*

Many times when people consider the virtue of obedience as it pertains to their wife, their thoughts are drawn immediately to St. Paul's famous words from Ephesians 5:21-25. St. Paul says, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body and is himself its Savior. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Sometimes when guys read this, they read it as permission from God to rule over their wives with an iron fist. I have even heard men use it in arguments with their wives. This is not what St. Paul meant by these words.

This teaching from Paul was actually radical for its time. It went against the customs of his day. Paul is trying to paint a picture that husbands and wives are partners with equal dignity. A husband and wife are supposed to be an image of the love of Christ for the Church. Jesus doesn't rule over his bride with an iron fist. He rules over her with love, mercy, and understanding. Our relationship with our wives isn't about obeying each other. It is about obeying Christ. Only in this way can a husband and wife draw strength from and be unified in Him. Christ must be at the center of our marriages. By obeying his commandment to love one another, we fulfill the promises we made in the sacrament of marriage.

Obedience in our marriage doesn't mean we spend time arguing over who should be in charge. It means we are agreeing on the need to submit to God and His desires for us to become one flesh. This means that we are to live out everything He has commanded us as it pertains to marriage. We are to stay true to our wives by obeying God's commandment to stay away from things that cause us to lust or commit adultery in our hearts. We are to find a way through all the difficulties and hardships and never agree to cut and run. Jesus said to the Pharisees in Matthew 19:6, "What therefore God has joined together let no man put asunder." This means sticking together through thick and thin. It means obeying God's commandment to trust Him and to love one another. The rest of it is just following St Paul's words. Obeying God in marriage means putting our wives first. Sacrificing our own wants and desires for the needs and desires of our wives should be our daily goal. Truly putting our wives first is what it means to show obedience to God's will for our marriages.

Our wives are a gift. We need to make sure we are honoring them each day, not lording over them and demanding their obedience. As men, we are the spiritual leaders of our households. This is our God-given position. Our wives should follow us, not out of some misplaced obedience, but out of the love they have for us that comes from knowing we hold them in the highest honor and regard. This is where peace in marriage comes from. When we each obey the roles that God has given us as loving partners, equal in worth and in love, we fulfill his desire for us to truly become one flesh. This week, let's make sure we are obedient to God in the way we treat our wives.

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 8, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Naturally we all have an inclination to command, and a great aversion to obey; and yet it is certain that it is more for our good to obey than to command; hence perfect souls have always had a great affection for obedience, and have found all their joy and comfort in it."

— St. Francis de Sales

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 6:7-15

TUESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

"And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 9, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"It is not hard to obey when we love the one whom we obey."

— St. Ignatius of Loyola



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 11:29-32

WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK IN LENT

When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah became a sign to the men of Nin'evah, so will the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nin'evah will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here."

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 10, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Obedience is a consecration of the heart, chastity of the body, and poverty of all worldly goods to the Love and Service of God. Blessed indeed are the obedient, for God will never permit them to go astray."

— St. Francis de Sales

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 7:7-12

THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK IN LENT

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 11, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"The cost of obedience is small compared with the cost of disobedience."

— St. Augustine

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 5:20-26

FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny."

[illegible]

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

[illegible]

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 12, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

“The joy promised by the Beatitudes is the very joy of Jesus himself: a joy sought and found in obedience to the Father.”

— Pope St. John Paul II



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 5:43-48

SATURDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

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WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 13, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Jesus points out to me the only way which leads to Love's furnace – that way is self-surrender – it is the confidence of the little child who sleeps without fear in its father's arms."

— St. Therese de Lisieux

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 9:28B-36

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white. And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Eli'jah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep but kept awake, and they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah"—not knowing what he said. As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

WEEK 2: OBEDIENCE AND MY WIFE

MARCH 14, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Rest assured that, when you remain thus in the state in which obedience has placed you, the merit of this same obedience extends over everything you do, giving each action inestimable value, even when things do not turn out as you wish."

— St. Vincent de Paul

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 6:36-38

MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK IN LENT

"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY WIFE TODAY?

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WEEK 3 REFLECTION:

OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

**If you are not married and do not have children, use this week to continue to grow your relationship with God and your neighbor while praying for your future spouse and children.*

We live in a society that seems to have become consumed with entitlement. We no longer live in a world where obedience and behavior dictate what one deserves. Now, everyone gets a trophy. Parents bribe and barter with their children to get them to accomplish things or to avoid an argument. We are so worried we will be seen as a bad parent or as someone who isn't giving our children what they "deserve." It really is a shame, and interacting with our children in this way is a tremendous detriment to them.

Obedience is one of the most important things we can teach our children and is necessary for a child to understand. True obedience is a gateway leading to our children learning and experiencing other virtues. It is a path to gratitude rather than a path to entitlement. It leads to respect, not anger and resentment. It teaches our children the need to help others versus demanding something of them. It teaches them to serve unconditionally versus putting conditions on how they give love to others. When we give into acting in self-will and entitlement, we are actually robbing our children of learning a path to virtue and sending them down a road that leads to vice.

Entitled children think they should be handed everything. Some of these children even feign true obedience. Often you can find kids who seem to be living out of a place of obedience but, in fact, are working to get whatever it is they think they deserve. Look at the parable of the prodigal son. We are all familiar with how the prodigal son demands his inheritance of his father and then goes away and loses it all. He finds himself in a terrible place because of this, so he heads home believing that even the life of one of his father's servants is better than the life he has created for himself. He is welcomed home by his father, and his brother is none too pleased to see his warm reception. He can't believe his father welcomed his brother back without any stipulations. In his eyes, he was the one who stuck around and followed all his father's orders. He felt that he should be given all the riches and inheritance he "deserved" because of his obedience. He basically goes off on his dad for not giving him rewards and gifts for what he claimed was loyal obedience. This, in fact, is not loyal obedience. It was born out of a sense of entitlement, and it was the cause of the "good" son's reaction.

This "what's in it for me" outlook is a terrible danger to our children, and it is the opposite of true obedience. As parents, we must teach them what it means to authentically obey. We model this by freely choosing to obey God without asking for anything in return. We exemplify it by the way we honor God's fourth commandment by obeying our own parents. When we speak about the need for obedience, we speak about the blessing and grace from God that it is. When we joyfully follow God's will and the will of others in authority over us in our lives, it has an impact on our children. They see authentic obedience modeled and can live it out in their own lives. This week, let's spend time modeling biblical obedience to our children so that we can begin to combat the rising tide of entitlement in our culture.

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 15, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

“He that is truly obedient does not wait for a command, but as soon as he knows what his superior wishes to have done immediately sets himself to work, without expecting an order.”

— St. Albert the Great

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 23:1-12

TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

Then said Jesus to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi by men. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren. And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ. He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

[illegible]

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 16, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Little children follow and obey their father. They love their mother. They know nothing of covetousness, ill-will, bad temper, arrogance and lying. This state of mind opens the road to heaven. To imitate our Lord's own humility, we must return to the simplicity of God's little ones."

— St. Hilary of Poitiers



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 20:17-28

WEDNESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day." Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 17, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"My daughter, know that you give Me greater glory by a single act of obedience than by long prayers and mortifications." (894)

— St Faustina, "Divine Mercy in my Soul"

SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 16:19-31

THURSDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

"There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Laz'arus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Laz'arus in his bosom. And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Laz'arus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Laz'arus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.'"

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WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 18, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"The virtue of obedience makes the will supple... It inspires the courage with which to fulfill the most difficult tasks."

— St. John Vianney



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 21:33-43, 45-46

FRIDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

"Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. But when they tried to arrest him, they feared the multitudes, because they held him to be a prophet."

[illegible]

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 19, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"A Christian faithful to obedience, knows not delays, but prepares his ears for hearing, and his hands and his feet for labor."

— St. Bernard of Clairvaux

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 1:16, 18-21, 24A

SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

And Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife.

[illegible]

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 20, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"The power of obedience! The lake of Gennesareth had denied its fishes to Peter's nets. A whole night in vain. Then, obedient, he lowered his net again to the water and they caught 'a huge number of fish.' Believe me: the miracle is repeated each day."

— St. Josemaria Escriva



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 13:1-9

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

There were some present at that very time who told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered thus? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Silo'am fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Lo, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down; why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Let it alone, sir, this year also, till I dig about it and put on manure. And if it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

[illegible][illegible]

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE AND MY CHILDREN

MARCH 21, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"I often thought my constitution would never endure the work I had to do, (but) the Lord said to me: 'Daughter, obedience gives strength.'"

— St. Teresa of Avila



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 4:24-30

MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Eli'jah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and Eli'jah was sent to none of them but only to Zar'ephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Eli'sha; and none of them was cleansed, but only Na'aman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and put him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them he went away.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CHILDREN TODAY?

WEEK 4 REFLECTION:

OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

Hopefully by now you have seen that no matter what relationship we are dealing with, practicing the virtue of obedience in that relationship begins with obedience to God. This is no different for our relationship with our neighbor. In fact, our relationship with our neighbor is one of the best training grounds for growing in the virtue of obedience.

Sometimes the hardest place to be obedient to God can be with our neighbor. We have been given pretty specific instruction from our Lord on how we are to be with them. In fact, out of the Ten Commandments, the last five God gave us are about how we should treat our neighbor. They tell us to honor our father and mother. They instruct us not to kill our neighbor. They forbid us to steal from those around us. We are told not to bear false witness against our neighbor. We are not allowed to covet our neighbor's wife. Finally, we are called not to be envious of our neighbors' goods. The world can make these seem like suggestions that can be ignored. Often people in the world do ignore them and cast them aside without a thought. The thing is, though, they aren't suggestions. They are commandments from our God. They are given to us to obey, not to discard.

Jesus summed up all these commandments when He told His disciples to love one another. We are to love one another as He loved us. He told us to turn the other cheek. He told us to love our enemies. These are instructions from our Lord on how to treat one another as Christians. The Lord gave us these instructions to obey. However, many Christians treat people no differently than the rest of the world does. We know the rules we have been given by our Lord, but we don't obey them. We fight, argue, and bicker more than we ever have. I get it. Sometimes loving our neighbor can be very hard. Especially when we have different beliefs and opinions about life and its situations. No one ever said obedience would be easy. No one ever claimed following orders wasn't going to be challenging. But that is what we are called to as Christians. We are called to be different. The thing that makes us different is that in our free will we choose the harder path. We choose to follow our Lord when it would be much easier to do what everyone else is doing. To follow Jesus, even though it is difficult, is a blessing.

My brothers, the need to be obedient is a gift. Through practicing it with our neighbors, the Lord allows us so many opportunities to grow in virtue. We learn humility. We learn patience. We learn perseverance. These are just a few of the gifts God showers upon us when we obey Him in how we treat those around us. Our lives are framed by our perspective. Let's not look negatively on how we are called to live towards our neighbor. Let's look at it as an amazing opportunity to grow in virtue and a grace to be able to be obedient to a loving God.

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 22, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"On each occasion I say: 'Lord, thy will be done! It's not what this or that one wants, but what You want me to do.' This is my fortress, this is my firm rock, this is my sure support."

— St. John Chrysostom

SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 18:21-35

TUESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

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HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 23, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"It is better to cherish the humble desire of living according to the rule of the community, and to be diligent in its observance, than to entertain exalted desires of performing imaginary wonders, for such imaginations only tend to swell our hearts with pride, lead us to undervalue our brethren, from an impression that we are better than they."

— St. Pachomius

 SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

MT 5:17-19

WEDNESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

"Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 24, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"The Devil doesn't fear austerity but holy obedience."

— St. Francis de Sales



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 11:14-23

THURSDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Now he was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Be-el'zebul, the prince of demons"; while others, to test him, sought from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and house falls upon house. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul. And if I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil. He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 25, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Don't give in to discouragement...If you are discouraged it is a sign of pride because it shows you trust in your own powers. Never bother about people's opinions. Be obedient to truth. For with humble obedience, you will never be disturbed."

— St.Teresa of Calcutta



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 1:26-38

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 26, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

“God is more pleased to behold the lowest degree of obedience, for His sake, than all other good works which you can possibly offer to Him.”

— St. John of the Cross



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 18:9-14

SATURDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 27, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"He who is his own master is a scholar under a fool."

— St. Bernard



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

LK 15:1-3, 11-32

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable: and he said, "There was a man who had two sons; 12 and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on[a] the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes

on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. "Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"A single instant passed under simple obedience is immeasurably more valuable in the sight of God than an entire day spent in the most sublime contemplation."

— St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

JOHN 4:43-54

MONDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

After the two days he departed to Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast. So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Caper'na-um there was an official whose son was ill. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Jesus therefore said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way. As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was living. So he asked them the hour when he began to mend, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live"; and he himself believed, and all his household. This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"Oh! how sweet and glorious is the virtue of obedience, by which all other virtues exist, because it is the offspring of charity! On it is founded the rock of faith; it is a queen, whom he that espouses is rich in every kind of good and whom no evil can assail."

— St. Catherine of Siena



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

JOHN 5:1-16

TUESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Beth-za'tha, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked. Now that day was the sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me, 'Take up your pallet, and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk?'" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did this on the sabbath.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 30, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"If people would do for God what they do for the world, what a great number of Christians would go to Heaven."

— St. John Vianney



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

JOHN 5:17-30

WEDNESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working still, and I am working." This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that he himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. "Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment. "I can do nothing on my own authority; as

I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

WEEK 4: OBEDIENCE AND MY NEIGHBOR

MARCH 31, 2022

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

"The first degree of humility is prompt obedience."

— St. Benedict of Nursia



SAY THE PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE

GOSPEL

JOHN 5:31-47

THURSDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

"If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is not true; there is another who bears witness to me, and I know that the testimony which he bears to me is true. You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony which I receive is from man; but I say this that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But the testimony which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has granted me to accomplish, these very works which I am doing, bear me witness that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen; and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent. You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men. But I know that you have not the love of God within you. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

ACTS OF OBEDIENCE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN OBEDIENCE IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,
Hear me.

From the desire of being esteemed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being loved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being extolled,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being honored,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being praised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being preferred
to others,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being consulted,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being approved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being humiliated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being despised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of suffering rebukes,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being calumniated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being wronged,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being suspected,
Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, others
may increase and I may decrease,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be praised and
I unnoticed,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be preferred to me
in everything,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may become holier than I,
provided that I may become as holy as
I should,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

THE LITANY OF TRUST

From the belief that I have to earn
Your love,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear that I am unlovable,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the false security that I have what
it takes,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear that trusting You will leave
me more destitute,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From all suspicion of Your words
and promises,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the rebellion against childlike
dependency on You,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From refusals and reluctances in
accepting Your will,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From anxiety about the future,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From resentment or excessive
preoccupation with the past,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From restless self-seeking
in the present moment,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From disbelief in Your love and presence,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being asked to give
more than I have,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the belief that my life has no
meaning or worth,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of what love demands,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From discouragement,

Deliver me, Jesus.

That You are continually holding me
sustaining me, loving me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That Your love goes deeper than my sins
and failings, and transforms me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is
an invitation to lean on You,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That you are with me in my suffering,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That my suffering, united to Your own, will
bear fruit in this life and the next,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You will not leave me orphan, that You
are present in Your Church,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That Your plan is better than anything else,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You always hear me and in Your
goodness always respond to me,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You give me the grace to accept
forgiveness and to forgive others,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You give me all the strength I need for
what is asked,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That my life is a gift,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You will teach me to trust You,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That You are my Lord and my God,

Jesus, I trust in you.

That I am Your beloved one,

Jesus, I trust in you.

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our tribulation, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by His Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities. O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness. As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. **Amen.**



JUST A GUY
IN THE PEW