



WHILE WE HAVE TIME,
LET US DO GOOD

FR. JACQUES-FRANÇOIS
DUJARIÉ



ST. EDWARD
HIGH SCHOOL
SPONSORED BY THE BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

LENTEN REFLECTIONS

Starting on Ash Wednesday
February 17, 2021 - February 28, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Hello Everyone,

We would first like to thank each and every person who has written a reflection for this book. Secondly, and with just as much gratitude, we wanted to thank all of the students, teachers, staff, coaches, and administrators that have made being in school to create the book possible. This year has been like none other. Like everything else in our lives, the school year has been one of fluidity, adjustments, uneasiness, tension, but most importantly; perseverance. The St. Edward community is founded upon and built within the ability to persevere. This year more than any other, this is what has allowed us to continue to be in this building, keeping the community alive. Our community is like none other that I have ever been a part of and the gratitude that I have to be a member of it is beyond what words can express.

When Ms. White first approached John and me, we knew that this would be more than a simple book of cookie-cutter reflections that talk about the traditions of Lent and what it means in a general sense. We talked amongst ourselves about how there has been an integral disconnect in the community due to the restrictions imposed upon all of us by the global pandemic. We decided that this book should and would be a collection representing not just the importance of Lent by a means of tradition but the importance of the grouping of individual reflections to create a book that brings a connection about the entirety of the school.

For the past year or so, the world and, subsequently smaller communities, have faced dissonance, violence, isolation, and at times, hopelessness. This book of reflections has acted as a way for the community to be brought closer together. These reflections do not come from those of a uniform religion, a uniform race, a uniform gender, but a singular community. The one thing that remains constant in the lives of those who have written these reflections is the St. Edward Community. It is my only hope that this is illustrated to each and every person who comes across this book.

It is our hope that upon reading this book and allowing a piece of each person who wrote the reflection to be imparted to you, that you allow their words to bring you to a sense of the community and the strength that has persisted here despite the tumultuous times we are currently experiencing. I encourage every one of us to read this. To read a few reflections or even just one. But I hope that when we read these, we are reminded that they are rooted in a community that perseveres. In a community that loves. In a community that forgives. In a community that grows. In a community that will not fall in the dark and will fight as long as there are those who are willing to. I hope upon reading these reflections you remember what community you belong to. That you remember what family you belong to. And you remember that We Are St. Ed!

Thank You All Sincerely,

St. Edward High School Student Ministers
John Shultz '22
Ian Fairfield '22
Ms. Cari White, Campus Minister

FEBRUARY 17 - ASH WEDNESDAY

Matthew 6:16, 16-18

The idea portrayed in these passages is one that is often very hard to grasp for Christians, and even harder to do in actuality. It's the idea that when you give to charity, do not let anybody see- do it in secret. This idea is tough for people to understand, myself included, because we see stories all around social media and on the news, of feel-good stories of people giving away large amounts of money, and of celebrities opening foundations and launching campaigns to help those in need. Charity is very public in our day and age, which encourages us to give as well and to shout it from the rooftops when we do so, to inspire others to do the same. But what the Bible teaches us through this passage is the exact opposite.

The Bible teaches us that it is wrong to flaunt and be extravagant whenever we pray or give to charity because doing so is hypocritical- you are doing it for the praise, the adulation of others, not solely to help those that need it. We struggle with this because we think, "well, at least they're giving, that's more than you or I could do" and that logic seems sound to us- giving is morally correct, no matter how much you flaunt it. We crave praise for our good deeds, we want to be recognized for the good deeds that we do. But we need to realize that the only praise that matters, the only judgment and recognition we need is from God. That's why we should give in secret, where nobody else can see because you are giving for God, you are giving to him. Not for anybody else, not for any adulation, but for God, and God alone.

William Perrins, 2023

FEBRUARY 18

Luke 9:22-25

What strikes me most about Luke 9: 22-25 is Christ's invitation for us to take up the cross on a daily basis and celebrate a life with the cross though we know what taking up the cross might suggest regarding Christ's— and our— pain: it is tragic; it is hard to fathom; it is saddening; it is daunting.

But taking up the cross is also necessary, selfless, authentic, and restorative.

In November of 2019, I overheard my friend and teaching colleague Mr. Owen Williams state to some of his Theology students: "Your response to God's love is your vocation." At the time, this statement restored me during a challenging time in my life, but I now equate that statement to taking up the cross: the best way to respond to God's love is to take our pain, our failings, our fears, our betrayals, and our doubts and make them our cross, not to bear, but to raise up the grandeur of our lives, to celebrate God's gifts, to "save" our lives on a daily basis despite the turmoil and the strife, and to see Christ's sacrifice as a gift and as an example.

Lent is a time to lean into our entire selves: our best and our worst. After all, our divine humanity riddles us with imperfections, failings, doubts, beauty, happiness, and wonder— synchronously. Take up your cross. Dust it off. Lean into its weight. Share it with others. Bear it proudly. And you will begin to equate carrying your cross as a salvific gift from Christ.

Mr. Urban
English Department

FEBRUARY 19

Matthew 9:14-15

In these two verses, Jesus uses a metaphor to describe why the Pharisees fast but the disciples do not fast. The short answer Jesus gives the Pharisees is that the Pharisees can not be upset when they are in the presence of the disciples, but when the Pharisees are without the disciples, it can be a struggle. You see the presence of Jesus is food in itself, you are not hungry and fasting when you are with Jesus, yet when you are without Jesus, you're hungry for guidance. That is what Jesus is trying to portray with this metaphor.

In this metaphor, Jesus is the bridegroom, when the Pharisees are in the presence of Jesus, they can not mourn or be hungry, they are filled with the presence of Jesus. Yet when the wedding is over and they are no longer in the presence of that bridegroom, they have the ability to mourn because they are now lacking in that fulfillment and guidance that Jesus gifts to them when they are with him. See John's Disciples are followers of John and Jesus, they are always filled with the fulfillment of Jesus because they follow and take in everything that Jesus gives out. That is how Jesus answers that question posed by the Pharisees.

John Shultz, 2022

FEBRUARY 20

Luke 5:27-32

This story can be found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is titled "the Call of Levi" or "the Call of Matthew", and its significance is frequently tied to the unique moment that Jesus calls one of his Apostles by name, and even more so, there is the sense that he is also one of the Evangelists.

This is among my favorite verses of scripture, but not because of Matthew's significance or importance. In this reading we hear that Jesus eats and drinks with sinners, and he calls them to follow him. Jesus is called a doctor, and we are reminded that if we are sick, if we are sinners, if we are in need of help, then he is for us. He calls us and he offers to share a great banquet with us.

I don't follow Jesus because I'm perfect, I am not. I don't follow Jesus because I have it all together, I do not. I follow him because he calls me in all of my imperfections and flaws, in my sinfulness and sickness, in my shortcomings and weakness, and he loves me unconditionally. The banquet he shares is one of companionship and life, and it is only exclusive when I refuse others in His company as some of the Pharisees and Scribes did. Their judgmental sense of self-righteousness separated them from Jesus and his dinner company.

Lastly, the specific thing about Levi or Matthew that is important to me is that he was called in the midst of doing his job. He heard Jesus' call in the middle of doing his job. We are called, and it is also in the midst of our daily lives. Whether you are a teacher or a student, the boss or an employee, the parent or the kid, we are all called in the lives that we are living, and so need to be open to hearing that call wherever and whatever we are. The humblest station in life is the perfect place to hear the call of Jesus and respond, and so become disciples, evangelists, and saints.

St. Andre Bessette, pray for us.

Mr. Merriman
Theology Department

FEBRUARY 21

Mark 1: 12-15

It is easy for us to think of Jesus only by how his story ends in Scripture. The focus is usually on three short years of his life. In this passage of Mark, we find Jesus just baptized and trekking out to the desert for 40 days. The world barely knows this Jesus at this time. He would seem to anyone...normal. He is amidst an inauguration of sorts in this part of the Gospel. He remains in the desert for 40 days, living in nature and among the animals. It says he is ministered to by angels as well. But the most interesting part of the passage is that he is tempted by Satan during his time there. Jesus rejects the temptation from Satan and returns to Galilee, prepared for his ministry and to begin his path towards our salvation as the Messiah. Jesus announces his aims publicly, saying "This is the time of fulfillment, the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel."

We often forget that Jesus is fully human while fully divine. He knows that he is God and what his purpose is, yet he lives with us, giving us a person to learn from, touch, love and meets us on our level. He could share a meal with us or work with us or even just hang out with us. This also means that he appears to be vulnerable, like we are all the time! Think of a time in your life when you felt weak or not good enough, where you were so upset that your mind jumped to conclusions and maybe you did something you shouldn't have because you were desperate. Or maybe it was something you thought you wanted, more than anything in the world. This is temptation. It seems innocent enough, you can usually start in a place where you are looking for a solution to something that is hard for you but it can quickly turn into a bad situation. In Mark, we do not know how Satan tempts Christ but we do know that Jesus rejects it during his 40 days away.

Lent is a time for preparation, it is a time for us to be in the "desert." It is no coincidence that there are 40 days of Lent as a reminder of the time Jesus spent preparing for his public ministry. As part of that preparation, we look at our own temptations and strive to live better in time for Jesus' Resurrection. We all go through our own deserts from time to time where we are faced with temptations. Think on what tempts you. Is it getting a rise out of someone? Is it always having your way? Is it not living well? Is it not controlling yourself? These are all normal things that happen to us, but I would say embrace the journey and the challenge. It is part of what makes us human, worthy of love and a support for others on their paths too. Always remember to assume love and that someone's life is better today because of you! In these 40 days, we have a chance to become better people and to relish in our humanity. We also see where we fall short and why we need to practice our faith to fill that gap. Jesus shows us that in order for us to realize our purpose too, we need some time of reflection, some time in the desert and some tempting to overcome and grow strong in our resolve and faith in Him. He proves in the passion He believes in us, Lent is our time to prove our belief in Him.

Mr. Wallenhorst
Dean of Student Life and Leadership

FEBRUARY 22

Matthew 16:13-19

Readers of the Gospels have a special advantage. That is, we can read passages while keeping in mind the entirety of the Gospel message. “I know what’s coming next” might emerge as a modus operandi. There’s nothing necessarily wrong with this way of reading. It’s just that we have to acknowledge that this surely was not the case for Jesus’ apostles.

That group of immediate followers were engaged in a ministry that wrapped them up in the incarnation – God in the flesh. But they didn’t have the advantage of knowing the whole story at once; rather, everything unfolded on their day-to-day encounters with Jesus. This is precisely what I have in mind when I read the question posed in today’s Gospel: “Who do you say that I am?”

Simon Peter’s response is “You are the Christ, the son of the living God.” I think his response is especially beautiful not because he got it right, but because he expressed how he’s come to know Jesus in relationship over time. Simon Peter did not have the entirety of the Gospel message at hand. Instead, he had a collection of memories, encounters, and time spent with Jesus. And when he gathered these elements together in his mind, he came to know that Jesus is God in the flesh.

I’m challenged to think of where my answer to Jesus’ question might derive. Is it an answer I have memorized and do I merely wish to get the question right? Or is it an answer that I’m open to encountering on my day-to-day relationship with Jesus? I pray to channel Simon Peter’s modus operandi and let things unfold over time. In the end, it’s not that we get the answer right, but that we come to know the answer through our day-to-day experiences with the son of the living God.

John Barrett ‘11
Theology Department

FEBRUARY 23

Matthew 6:7-15

The “Our Father”, or “The Lord’s Prayer”- we all know it. When the disciples asked Jesus how we should pray, he answered with this divine prayer. We should listen attentively and we should also pray it often. And we do. I find myself leading the Our Father after practices and before games almost always as the “go to” prayer. I find the volume in the church rises with this prayer amongst all the other responses during Mass on Sunday. Every Christian denomination adopts this prayer. Maybe this was Jesus’ intention.

Instead of discussing the salutation or the seven petitions of the Our Father itself, a couple other ideas struck me when reading the passage. It’s the passages before and after the prayer. First, Jesus says “don’t babble”. Lastly, Jesus accentuates the forgiveness part of his divine prayer. “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” is in the prayer. But, after the prayer itself, Jesus mentions it again. He states over again that if we forgive others, your heavenly Father will forgive you. And if we do not forgive others, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. He phrased it another way a few verses later in Mt 7:2, “For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured back out to you.”

Putting it together, it is saying to me, let's trust in God. He knows what we need, so we don't need a ton of words to make Him "get it". Second, get to the main points. Express gratitude and ask sincerely for what we need in love. God's grace is overabundant. Finally, Jesus overemphasizes forgiveness. Good enough for me. Let us ask this Lent that as we pray the Our Father with a pure heart that we grow in the charitable act of forgiveness.

Tom Lombardo
Math Teacher/Football Coach

FEBRUARY 24

Luke 11:29-32

This story from the Gospel of Luke is called "The Demand for a Sign". The main part of this reading is how Jesus promises that one more sign will be given. The people are demanding another sign even after Jesus had healed a deaf man that was possessed by a demon. Although the people accused him of using the power of Satan and still didn't believe Jesus. That is why Jesus accuses the crowd of being an 'evil' generation.

The one more sign that God promises is the sign of Jonah. Jonah was a man who disobeyed a command from God and headed to the city of Tarshish by boat. God sent a severe storm that sent Jonah into the water and into the belly of a giant fish for three days and three nights. The three days may sound familiar to you because this means that the sign of Jonah was a reference to Jesus taking three days to rise from the dead. Jesus rising from the dead would be his last sign to those people. When those people see the last sign and realize that Jesus has risen from the dead, they would then believe in Him. It was Jesus's final sign that put the Catholic Church into movement.

This Gospel calls for us to reflect by looking for signs of God in our lives. When I have a bad day, I ask God to give me a sign of his existence. Although, he does give me signs that I don't see at first. Those signs of his existence can be seen through my family, friends, and all of the other things in my life that I am thankful for.

Brendan O'Malley, 2023

FEBRUARY 25

Matthew 7:7-12

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

In today's gospel reading Jesus speaks to his followers directly. There is no parable for us to interpret or miracle for us to witness. Instead, Christ simply lays out the facts. "Ask (of God) and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." But how often do we really take the time to ask, to seek or to knock? How often do we take the time to reach out to God in prayer?

Having three kids, my typical weeknight and weekend are full of rushing kids around to dance practice, swim lessons or to CYO games. But in the midst of a global pandemic I have found myself forced to slow down and

appreciate the quiet moments in life. Weeknight practices have been replaced by dinner time together and weekend competitions have been replaced by family game nights or movie time. In stopping the normal rush of everyday life I have rediscovered what is most meaningful and sacred.

However, even Jesus took time away from his disciples to pray and any parent during this pandemic will tell you they too are in need of some major self reflection time. It is in the quiet moments that I can take the time to ask, to seek or to knock. As Mother Teresa so profoundly says, "In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you." But if we never take that time for silence and prayer how will we ever hear His voice?

During this lenten season let us rediscover what is most sacred to us. Let us take the time to reach out to God in quiet prayer, offering up our needs and the needs of others. For as Jesus says, "seek and you will find."

Saint Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us.

Mike Yako
Theology Department

FEBRUARY 26

Matthew 5:20-26

Anger is such a powerful human emotion, one that I am all too familiar with, and this reading is a strong call to think about the impact my emotions have on me, my relationship with others, and my relationship with God. The act of true forgiveness, whether we are the one doing the forgiving or the one in need of forgiveness, is also an intense, powerful human experience. The juxtaposition of anger and forgiveness is what stands out to me in today's reading. Unfortunately, I am much quicker to anger than I am to forgive. When I think about this passage, I find myself thinking of the line in the "Our Father" in which we pray that God "...forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. I remember my High School Math teacher, Mr. Nappi, reflecting on those words and what we were really praying for at that moment.

I see a powerful metaphor in the "...prison....you will never get out of until you have paid the last penny." Anger is a prison. It isolates us, confines us, and limits our full human potential. I am never made better or fuller by my anger. Holding grudges or insulting others drags me down and weakens my spirit. The power we have to forgive is also the power we have to free ourselves.

Mr. Matt Stepnowski
Dean of Academics

FEBRUARY 27

Matthew 5:43-48

After reading this passage from Matthew chapter 5, one word stuck with me: perfection. It is what we all seek and strive for in some way. Maybe we strive to be the perfect friend, athlete, student, teacher, coach, mentor, husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter etc. in order that we please not only ourselves, but others as well. In seeking perfection, it often can take different forms for different people depending upon your stage of life. Jesus, however, challenges us on how to strive towards perfection in a timeless way that is not bound by a particular stage of life, but rather crosses over every stage of life. He challenges us to be perfect in love.

Jesus wants us to not only love our family and friends, but calls us to love everyone. This can be extremely hard to do if we pass judgement or feel someone has done harm to us. We can become defensive and closed off towards people if we have these feelings within us or see them as a threat to us. However, it is through vulnerability that we can open ourselves up to give and receive love to all people. Being vulnerable can be uncomfortable. Sharing yourself to others in an open way is something we may not be used to doing everyday.

In the Gospels, we see Jesus time and time again encountering all different people i.e. the leper, tax collectors, the Samaritan woman, Pharisees, the adulterous, the demonic, the paralytic, the Roman soldier, etc. Jesus has an openness to all people. He is willing to encounter people of all walks of life and circumstances. He is our example to become vulnerable and to be a presence of love to all people. It is only when we encounter and are present to others that we are able to love through our gift of self and seek to will the good of that other person.

Let us strive to love all people in the unfailing way that God loves us.

Rick Kubrak

Theology Department

FEBRUARY 28

Mark 9:2-10

What strikes me about this passage is Peter's deep faith in Jesus. Peter did not know where Jesus was taking him or why for that matter but he still followed him up the mountain. Additionally, when Jesus was transformed before him, Peter did not run, although being scared, he instead called out to Jesus and offered to make him a tent. Ultimately, Peter's faith and trust in Jesus is what guides his life and it is something that we should try to imitate in our own lives.

Another key takeaway from this passage is that we do not know when or how Jesus will present himself to us. It might be in the form of a friend needing help in a lab, or a homeless man in need of some warm clothing, or a brother in need of cheering up. We must always be watching for Jesus in our lives and see him and his presence in the people surrounding us.

Lord, help us to have faith like Peter did and trust in you all the days of our lives. Give us the wisdom and understanding to see you present in the others around us.

St. Edward for us!

Thomas Hoffman, 2022

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