

Reflection and Prayer for the season of Lent.

Sunday: Peace in the World.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

"Conflicts and wars continue uninterrupted. Tragically, many regions and communities can no longer remember a time when they dwelt in security and peace. Numerous cities have become epicentres of insecurity: citizens struggle to maintain their normal routine in the face of indiscriminate attacks by explosives, artillery and small arms. Children are unable to study. Men and women cannot support their families." (Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Monday: Migrants.

"The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up, and taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt." (Matthew 2:13-14)

"People are being forced to take flight, leaving behind not only their homes but also their family history and their cultural roots.....May we never yield to the temptation to disregard others, especially those in greatest need, and to look the other way; instead, may we strive daily, in concrete and practical ways to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another." (Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Tuesday: The Sick.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew, 11:28-29)

"I renew my appeal to political leaders and the private sector to spare no effort to ensure access to Covid-19 vaccines and to the essential technologies needed to care for the sick, the poor and those who are most vulnerable. The pandemic and other events that marked humanity's path this past year have taught us how important it is to care for one another.....In the face of the pandemic we have realized that we are in the same boat, all of us fragile and disorientated, but at

the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together. (Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Wednesday: The Carers.

“Jesus made a tour through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and all kinds of illness. And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is rich but the labours are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest.’” (Matthew 9:35-37)

“I think too of physicians and nurses, pharmacists, researchers, volunteers, chaplains and the personnel of hospitals and healthcare centres. They have made, and are continuing to make, great sacrifices to be present to the sick, to alleviate their sufferings and to save their lives; indeed, many of them have died in the process.” (Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Thursday: Trócaire.

Then they will say to him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you? “And the King will answer, ‘I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least, you did it to me.’” (Matthew 25:37-41)

“The first generation of Christians shared what they had, so that no one among them would be in need. They strove to make their community a welcoming home, concerned for every human need and ready to care for those most in need. It became customary to make voluntary offerings in order to feed the poor, bury the dead and care for orphans, the elderly and victims of disasters.” (Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Friday: The Forgiveness of Sins.

“Jesus said, “Tell me. Suppose a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays; will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go in search of the stray? In truth I tell you, if he finds it, it gives him more joy than do the ninety-nine that did not stray at all. Similarly, it is never the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.” (Matthew 18:12-14)

Jesus’ life and ministry represent the supreme revelation of the Father’s love for humanity. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus showed himself to be the one consecrated by the Lord and ‘sent to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.’ These messianic actions bear eloquent witness to the mission he received from the Father.....At the culmination of his mission, Jesus gave the ultimate proof of his care for us by offering himself on the cross to set us free from the slavery of sin and death. By the sacrificial gift of his life, he opened for us the path to love. To each of us he says, ‘Follow me; go and do likewise.’

(Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

Saturday: The Earth

Jesus said, “Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them.....Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the wild flowers growing in the field, will he not much more look after you?” (Matthew 6:26-30)

This past year has taught us how important it is to care for one another and for creation in our efforts to build a more fraternal society..... In the Bible, the book of Genesis shows from its very first pages the importance of care or protection in God’s plan for humanity. It highlights the relationship between mankind and the earth, and among ourselves as brothers and sisters. In the biblical account of creation, God entrusts the garden ‘planted in Eden’ to Adam’s care, to “till it” and “keep it”. This entails making the earth productive, while at the same time protecting it and preserving its capacity to support life.”

(Pope Francis)

Our Father.....

(Quotes attributed to Pope Francis are taken from his message for the 54th World Day of Peace, “A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace”, 1st January 2021.)