



A. PETRUGGI

March 12, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
8:00 a.m. HOLY EUCHARIST Rite I
10:00 a.m. HOLY EUCHARIST Rite II

Saint Peter's Episcopal Church
Hebron, Connecticut
The Rev. Everett C. Perine, Rector
Josh Ziemski, Organist

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THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

We Prepare Ourselves with Reflection and Confession

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins

People ***His mercy endureth forever.***

The Decalogue and Summary of the Law

The Confession and Absolution

Lord, have mercy upon us

BCP page 317

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THE WORD OF GOD

We Listen to God's Word

The Collect for the Day and Readings from the Lectionary (*Readings may be found on the last page of the bulletin*)

The Sermon

The Reverend Everett Perine

We Proclaim Our Belief

The Nicene Creed

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We Offer Prayers of Intercession, and Thanksgiving

The Prayers of the People

BCP page 329

We Are Reconciled to One Another through God's Love and Forgiveness

The Peace

THE HOLY COMMUNION

We Offer Our Gifts to God

Bread and wine for our Eucharistic meal are brought to the altar on behalf of the gathered body.

We Proclaim Our Faith

The Eucharistic Prayer I

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The Lord's Prayer

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We Come Humbly Before God to Share Communion

The Breaking of the Bread and Invitation to Communion

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O Lamb of God

BCP page 337

The people come forward to receive the bread and the wine

The Communion

We Are Sent Out Into the World

The Post Communion Prayer

BCP page 339

The Lenten Blessing: Holy eternal Majesty,
Holy incarnate Word,
Holy abiding Spirit,
Bless you for evermore. ***Amen.***

The Dismissal Let us bless the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God.***

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Prelude: “Verso in d” (Domenico Zipoli) and “Tiento II de falsas (Juan Bautista Cabanilles)

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

We Prepare Ourselves with Reflection and Confession

Opening Hymn #401 (verses 1–3) “The God of Abraham Praise”

Leoni

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins

People ***His mercy endures forever.***

The Decalogue and Summary of the Law

BCP page 350

The Confession and Absolution

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Kyrie: S-86 “Kyrie”

Hurd

The words "Kyrie eleison; Christe eleison" (meaning "Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy") come from the Greek liturgy and harken back to the earliest Christian liturgies which were celebrated in the Greek language.

THE WORD OF GOD

We Listen to God’s Word

The Collect for the Day

BCP page 218

Readings from the Lectionary (*Readings may be found on the last page of the bulletin*)

The Sermon

The Reverend Everett Perine

We Proclaim Our Belief

The Nicene Creed

BCP page 358

We Offer Prayers of Intercession, and Thanksgiving

The Prayers of the People Form IV

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We Are Reconciled to One Another through God’s Love and Forgiveness

The Peace

THE HOLY COMMUNION

We Offer Our Gifts to God

Offertory Hymn #440 “Blessed Jesus, at thy word”

*Bread and wine for our Eucharistic meal are brought to the altar on behalf of the gathered body.
The ushers collect the offering of gifts and present them at the altar as an offering to God*

Leibster Jesu

We Proclaim Our Faith

The Eucharistic Prayer A

The Sanctus: #S-129 “Holy, holy, holy Lord”

The Lord’s Prayer

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Powell

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We Come Humbly Before God to Share Communion

The Breaking of the Bread: **“Jesus, remember me”** (*Sung 3 times*)

Taize

Jesus Remember Me
Ostinato Refrain

Je-sus, re-mem-ber me when you come in-to your King-dom.
Je-sus, re-mem-ber me when you come in-to your King-dom.

Text: Luke 23:42; Taize Community, 1981
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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The Invitation to Communion (*The people come forward to receive the bread and the wine*)

The Communion

The Communion Anthem: “Diapason Movement”

Maurice Greene

We Are Sent Out Into the World

The Post Communion Prayer

The Lenten Blessing: Holy eternal Majesty,
Holy incarnate Word,
Holy abiding Spirit,
Bless you for evermore. *Amen.*

BCP page 339

Closing Hymn #690 “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah”

Cwm Rhondda

The Dismissal
People

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: “Fuga a due Voci”

John Christopher Pepusch

*During Lent, a Service for Healing will follow the conclusion of the Holy Eucharist.
After the dismissal, anyone who wishes to participate in this service is invited to gather at the altar rail
for a time of silent prayer and meditation.*

A SERVICE FOR HEALING

A Word about the Ministry of Healing

The ministry of healing is part of the sacramental life of the Episcopal Church and all people, whether baptized or not, are welcome to come and receive this sacrament.

This sacrament emerges from our belief that the love of God through the presence of the Holy Spirit has the power to heal our emotional, physical and spiritual suffering.

Although we may ask for a specific healing, we realize that it is God who decides how this healing is to occur. Healing may come to us in the form of physical recovery, emotional well-being or spiritual wholeness.

The power of the healing service lies not with our expectation of results, but rather with our desire to allow the Spirit of God who dwells within us to transform our lives and help us to accept the healing power of God's love.

Celebrant O God, be in our hearts and on our lips as we come before you seeking your healing love.

Silence is kept

Celebrant Brothers and sisters in Christ, if you wish to seek prayer, for yourself, on behalf of someone or for a crisis in the world, I invite you to receive the laying on of hands. Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are troubled and I will give you rest." So come, we who are burdened by regrets and anxieties, we who are broken in body or in spirit, we who feel deeply within ourselves the divisions and injustices of our world. Come, for Jesus invites us to bring him our brokenness.

*Those who wish for laying-on of hands and anointing for healing may come forward.
When all have received the sacrament of healing, the celebrant continues.*

Celebrant God of compassion and love,
People **We offer you all of our suffering and pain. Give us strength to bear our weakness, healing even when there is no cure, peace in the midst of turmoil and love to fill the spaces of our lives. Glory to God, from whom all love flows, glory to Jesus, who showed his love through suffering, and glory to the Holy Spirit, who brings light to the darkest places. Amen.**

Celebrant God love you and have mercy upon you; through the cross of Christ, pardon you and set you free. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. God forgives you. Forgive others. Forgive yourself. In the name of the Lover of Souls, the Beloved, and the Love that exists between them, may the peace of God be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Go in peace, giving thanks for the healing power of God's love.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Service: If you are looking to find some quiet time or time devoted to a simple Lenten discipline, please consider joining us during Lent for our Wednesday evening service. It begins at 7 p.m. with the Way of the Cross - a prayerful procession around the church, stopping at various "stations at crosses" to reflect on aspects of Jesus walk to the cross, death and burial. This is followed by our normal evening Communion service which includes a service of laying-on of hands and anointing with oil for healing. Periods of silence will be maintained throughout the service for those wishing to make "Being Silent with God" part of their Lenten discipline (please see last page of bulletin).

Feel free to contact Father Perry for more information.

PARISH FAMILY REMEMBRANCES AND THANKSGIVINGS ~ MARCH 12, 2017

We pray for our clergy: Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael, the Presiding Bishop; Ian and Laura, the Bishops of Connecticut; and Perry our Priest;

In St Peter's Cycle of Prayer we pray for all our parish family and especially for those who celebrate their birthdays this week: Bob Winter (3/18), Kim Sullivan (3/13), Matthew Alexander (3/16), Megan Sulzinski (3/16), Owen Kozlak (3/12);

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for Grace & St. Peter's, Hamden; Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford; Good Shepherd, Hartford; Bishops, ECCT staff, and parish employees, and their families.

Current Prayer List

Prayers added the week of March 12: Briant Marsh; Sienna Roper; Jim & Marilyn Kew, Phil, Toni; Stephanie; Irene; Victoria, Paulette Likoudis, Bill, Walter, Melissa, Maidey, Jane, Jim & Bernie, Anna C.; John & the Romero family; Kelly; Tiffany Nicole, Chris; John & Sue; Lauren, Jeni, Kile, Lianie, Dana; Gina; Eva & Bill; The Gentino Family; Justin, Stephanie; Grace; Peter, the Kell family; Janet Kay; Sam Downey;

Prayers added the week of March 5: Jeremy, Gareth Bromell, Liz, John, Kathleen, Bill & June, Wendy, Sienna Roper; Phil Patros; Dianne Sayers; Jennifer, Frank Tomlinson; Derek, Nicky and Jackie, Cheryl F., Matt; Jules Bessette; Ruth Wilson, Diane; Joe, Cee-Cee; Dorothy; Dick Sage, Kathy; Julia, Dave; a Dear Friend; Emil & Annie; Ms. Kamins; Barbara Potterton; Louis Schluntz;

Prayers added the week of February 26: Edward Murray, Susie, Henry Jones, Sam Docker, Michael Docker, Nicole, Janet Kay, Brian, Taylor Benson and Brian Benson, Kara Perriolat, The Caprara Family; Dianne Sayers, Mark and Linda Sayers Reynolds; Dawn; Christina; Sandra Hastings; The MacDonough Family; Rod & Janice Lambeth; Charles; The Conrad families, Deanne & John Bowen; Danielle, Chantelle and Kayleigh; Louis Domingue, Jim Vicevich, Bob & Bev Winter, Flo Columbe, Carolyn Asmuth, Caitlin Stevens, Richard MacRobbie, Janice Griffiths, Connie Rich, Mike Duval, Dianne Sayers, Donna Doyker and Marissa Garcia; Aly, Steffi; Susan; Elizabeth, Kim, Andrée, Dianna Tedesco; the Bossi and Liska families, Barbara and Family; Maidey and Ken, Everette; Jeanne, Sam; Helen and Family; Karen Emmons;

We pray for all caregivers who selflessly give of themselves to care for loved-ones;

We pray for all people suffering hunger, fear & displacement due to war and natural disaster;

We pray for all with financial problems; those who have lost their jobs and homes; for the well-being of our families during life's changes; all who have suffered trauma; those who are ill, lonely or grieving; our veterans; all who travel; all those suffering with cancer; anyone who is hospitalized or disabled; those affected by natural disasters; and all abused, neglected and missing children.

We pray for law enforcement officers.

We pray for healing and peace.

We pray for our whole nation: for peace, non-violence, and healing

We pray for our service men and women throughout the world.

We pray for all who have died.

We give thanks for the many blessings of our lives and the joy we experience in our relationship with God.

Parish Town Meeting this Sunday after each service: Father Perry will address issues regarding the upcoming transition including "Leaving Well Policy" and coverage for services and pastoral care.

Your presence and questions are welcome! Please try to be a part of the Parish Meeting.

Stewardship Corner

Our Vision: “Welcoming all. Serving our Community. Connecting with Others”

A life of Stewardship has as its foundation acts of generous giving. As part of our vision statement, "Serving Our Community" describes our intent to extend our generosity outward into the communities in which we live.

"Serving our Community" Throughout the World

Our church school children have chosen to support those in need around the globe through the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund. Specifically, they chose three items to raise funds for - chickens, clean water, and fruit trees. The children will be selling chocolate bars at coffee hour after church throughout Lent (so no giving up chocolate this year). The cost is \$2 per bar, or 3 bars for \$5. Please consider supporting their fundraiser.

- **The Food donations in March are designated for the Lebanon Food pantry.**
- **We are also always accepting clothing, magazines (cut off the address label, please), kitchen utensils and items for personal hygiene for the Brooklyn Bridge project which helps men recently released from prison to re-enter society.**
- **The No-freeze Project, also out of Willimantic aims to help homeless persons with temporary shelter as well as the following:**
 - **Non-Instant Coffee, Sweetener, Non-Dairy Creamer, Hot Chocolate, Paper products,**
 - **Toilet paper, paper towels, napkins.**
 - **Vinyl or plastic Pillow case covers**
 - **Coffee cups (small size, disposable)**
 - **Plastic utensils (spoons/forks)**
 - **Socks (white preference)**
 - **Men’s boxer shorts all sizes**
 - **Women’s briefs – all size**
 - **Razor blades**
 - **Shaving Creme**
 - **Toothbrushes**
 - **Deodorant**
 - **Women’s hygiene products (pads, tampons)**
 - **Plastic soap saver boxes**
 - **Sweat pants/shirts (med/large/Xtra/XXtra large)**
 - **Laundry detergent (powder)**
 - **Floor and bathroom cleaner**
 - **Office supplies – Call to see what are needs are**
 - **Gift Cards to Stop & Shop, BJ’s Walmart, Staples and Home Depot of any value.**

Concert with Josh Ziemski playing in Norwich.

On March 19th at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Norwich our organist and choir director, Josh Ziemski will be joining the Norwich Diocesan Choir and “Celticity” (a Celtic trio consisting of classical guitar, flute, and voice) in a Celtic Concert on St. Patrick’s day weekend. Admission is free.
St. Patrick’s is located at 213 Broadway in Norwich.

"Connecting with Others" At St. Peter's

St. Peter's Pastoral Care Ministry is seeking parishioners who would like to visit and/or bring communion to the home bound and the sick. This ministry supports the work of the priest and serves our community by offering regular visitation to those who cannot make it to church. We also are hoping to recruit parishioners to join our numerous pastoral care ministries: bereavement, prayer shawl, meals to the homebound among others. **Interested in becoming more involved in Pastoral Care? We will be meeting on Thursday evening, March 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the parish hall. Please join us!**

If you are interested in any of these opportunities and would like more information, please contact me or one of our wardens: Rob Mangiafico and Barb Parkyn. **Please note: If you are already serving your community by volunteering your time, we would like to know about it!**

Fr. Perry

Parish News

Community Dinners Resume!!: We are kicking off the new season with our first Community Dinner, the **Polish Dinner**, to be held **next Saturday March 18th beginning at 4:00 p.m.** This is always a very popular and well attended dinner, so plan to come early to taste the fantastic pierogies, stuffed cabbage, kielbasa, pickled beets, sauerkraut and more. Take outs are available. \$14 for adults and \$6 for children. Anyone wishing to help out with food preparation, serving, set up & clean up are welcome indeed. Please speak with Marcia or Chuck Eaton. Monetary and food contributions are always welcome (see lists at the back of church).

Women's Club - The next meeting of the St. Peter's Women's Club will be held on Monday, March 20th at 7:00 at Audrey Gasper's home, 68 Hall Road, Hebron. We'd like to set up work sessions for St. Nicholas Fair projects. If you have a good idea for a project, bring it with you! If you know of an event we might enjoy, bring that info, too! You can call Audrey at 860-228-0201 for directions or more info. Come join us for good food and good conversation. Everyone is welcome!

Directory Photos: This is a last call to please submit a photo to go along with your entry in the parish directory no later than this week. You can email it or drop off a photo to be scanned. Rob Mangiafico or Kathy Kniep will be available at coffee hour after the 10 AM service to take a picture for the directory if you'd like. We reserve the right to use a picture of our choosing if one is not submitted... (just kidding, but please consider sending one in.). Thanks! Rob Mangiafico, Co-Warden

SAVE THE DATE! **Sunday, April 23rd** will be a 'Youth Sunday' celebration at the 10 a.m. service, including the annual church school **Easter Pageant**, featuring special music sung by the church school children under the direction of Rodican Rose Bonn. That afternoon we will have a **celebration of St. Peter's and Father Perry's retirement** in Phelps Hall. More details to follow soon.

Vacation Bible School (VBS), an ecumenical fun-filled week for children (ages K-6), will be held at Gilead Congregational Church from July 24-28 from 9 a.m. to 12:30. Our theme this year is "Hero Central: Discovering your Strength in God". The mascot is Flame the Red Panda. Super Hero costumes, songs, arts and crafts, fun decorations, snacks, and another great missions project are on tap for this year.

Around the Diocese

Spring Training Event - April 1! The Diocese is sponsoring its annual Spring Training Event on Saturday, April 1 at Lincoln Middle School, 164 Centennial Avenue, Meriden from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. Workshop categories include Christian Formation, Communication, Connecting & Collaborating, Essential Parish Operations, Leadership, Passion & Call, Pastoral Care, Social Justice & Advocacy, Stewardship and Worship. Several Vestry members will attend and invite any parishioners to join them. More information with links to Workshop Booklet and Registration may be found at: <https://www.episcopalct.org/spring-training/>

LENT HAS BEGUN!

Here are the services at St. Peter's during Lent:

Sundays in Lent at 8 and 10: Holy Eucharist beginning with the Penitential Rite. A Healing Service will be offered after each Eucharist for those who desire prayers for healing.

Wednesday evenings in Lent: Services start at 7 p.m. in the church with the "Way of the Cross" (an Episcopal version of the "Stations of the Cross") to be followed by our regular Communion service with healing liturgy.

Holy Week services:

April 9 @ 8 & 10: Liturgy of the Palms: Sunday of the Passion with Passion Gospel in parts

April 10 & 11: No services - the Church will be open from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. for private devotion

April 12 @ 7:30 p.m. Tenebrae

April 13 @ 6:30 p.m. Agape Meal with Foot Washing Liturgy

@ 7:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Liturgy with Stripping of the Altar

April 13 @ 9 p.m. thru April 14 @ 12 noon: Prayer Vigil (Reading through the New Testament)

April 14 @ 12 noon & 7:30 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy with the Passion according to John

April 15 @ 7:30 p.m. the Great Vigil of Easter with Confirmation at Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford

Something new this year!

We have added a Prayer Vigil to our Holy Week offerings. Following the Maundy Thursday Liturgy we are providing an opportunity for families and individual parishioners of St. Peter's to help us read through the New Testament which recounts the life of Jesus and the birth and coming of age of the Church. The Vigil begins at 9 pm on Thursday evening and continues through 12 noon on Friday. *More details coming soon!*

Some thoughts to guide us through Lent!

Our Gospel reading today recalls the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountaintop. When the moment is over, Jesus comes off the mountaintop and heads toward Jerusalem where he will enter in glory (Palm Sunday) before being arrested, tried and crucified (The Passion). He does not make the journey alone for he invites his disciple to join him, saying in effect, "Come walk with me." Accordingly, Jesus invites us to join him this Lent, following him on the path that leads to Jerusalem and the cross. That begs the question, "What does it mean to 'Walk with Jesus'?"

Here are some thoughts about practical ways we can walk with Jesus:

- **Spend time in prayer** (carve out a few moments each today be in prayer)
- **Join in worship** (Join us on Sundays for Eucharist followed by a Healing Service for interested parishioners. Join us on Wednesday evenings for Walking the Way of the Cross followed by a Healing Service and Communion.)
- **Simplify our lives** (Have simple meals and reduce "frivolous" spending)
- **Reassess our use of our resources** (Take inventory on what you spend your money on - and what you neglect)
- **Use our time and material resources to help others** (Consider volunteering for one of our fundraisers or local support agencies; increase your pledging to St. Peter's; donate food and personal items to our monthly ingathering; reconnect with people who have been an important part of your life and thank them; take time to listen to others and, when appropriate, offer them your support)
- **Maybe you have some ideas you would like to share! Consider submitting them to Sue Ostrout for inclusion in the Vision or pass them on to the office, to one of the wardens or to Father Perry!**

MARCH/APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March 12 2nd Sunday Lent Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 10 a.m. Church School Parish Town Meetings 8 & 10	March 13 Wardens' Meeting 9:15 am Vestry 7 pm	March 14 Choir practice 6:30 pm	March 15 Way of the Cross with Communion & Healing Service 7 pm	March 16 Pastoral Care meeting 7 pm	March 17 Fr. Perry Day off	March 18 Community Dinner 4 - 6 pm
March 19 3rd Sunday Lent Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 10 a.m. Church School	March 20 Wardens' Meeting 9:15 am	March 21 Liturgy planning meeting 9:30 am Choir practice 6:30 pm	March 22 Way of the Cross with Communion & Healing Service 7 pm	March 23	March 24 Fr. Perry Day off	March 25
March 26 4th Sunday Lent Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 10 a.m. Church School Girl Scouts (KS)	March 27 Wardens' Meeting 9:15 am	March 28 Choir practice 6:30 pm Boy Scouts 7 pm	March 29 Way of the Cross with Communion & Healing Service 7 pm	March 30	March 31 Fr. Perry Day off	April 1 Annual ECCT Spring Training in Meriden
April 2 5^h Sunday Lent Holy Eucharist 8 & 10 10 a.m. Church School	April 3 Wardens' Meeting 9:15 am	April 4 Choir practice 6:30 pm	April 5 Way of the Cross with Communion & Healing Service 7 pm Buildings and Grounds 7 pm	April 6	April 7 Fr. Perry Day off	April 8
April 9 PALM (PASSION) SUNDAY Holy Eucharist 8 & 10	April 10 Wardens' Meeting 9:15 am Church open 7 to 9 pm for devotion	April 11 Choir practice 6:30 pm Church open 7 to 9 pm for devotion	April 12 Tenebrae 7:30 pm	April 13 Agape Meal & Foot-washing 6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Liturgy 7:30 pm Prayer Vigil	April 14 Prayer Vigil continues Good Friday Liturgy 12 noon & 7:30 pm	April 15 The Great Vigil of Easter @ Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford

The Readings for the Second Sunday in Lent

The Collect

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Old Testament: Genesis 12:1-4a

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

The Response: Psalm 121

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
from where is my help to come?
- 2 My help comes from the LORD, *
the maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved *
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep;
- 5 The LORD himself watches over you; *
the LORD is your shade at your right hand,
- 6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
nor the moon by night.
- 7 The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; *
it is he who shall keep you safe.
- 8 The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

The Epistle: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The Gospel: John 3:1-17

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

Taking on Silence with God

The Gospel for this day recalls Jesus' journey of 40 days and nights in the desert. Jesus used this period of silence to "commune" with God and prepare himself for the journey that lay ahead of him. Perhaps, following the way of Jesus, you would like to make silence part of your Lenten journey. If so, here are some suggestions to help you carve out a possible discipline for seeking silence in the desert this Lent:

Find a place in your life to be your "desert" where you can set aside a period of quiet time to be with God:

- Set a time each day that you can devote to silence – early morning, during work hours, before bed – when is not important
- One minute, five minutes or even more – the duration is not important, so begin with small amounts of time and build up to longer moments if you desire to do so
- If you find that you missed your allotted quiet time, stop what you are doing and take that moment to enter into your silence
- The place you choose as your "desert" is up to you – it can be in a room of your house, in church, outdoors – anywhere that you can be alone and be silent
- What you do, read or think during your time with God does not matter – be creative and make it reflect who you are
 - You can read Scripture or Lenten devotionals followed by silence
 - You can walk the Way of the Cross in church
 - You can hold a hand-held cross or wrap yourself in a prayer-shawl
 - You can use meditation techniques or assume Yoga positions
 - You can simply walk and be silent
 - You can be silent as you cook or bake or work in your shop or fix your car

Don't set goals for yourself. Just allow the silence to let you want to move to the next encounter with God. Remember you are building a relationship with God and that takes time, it takes commitment and it takes a desire to want to continue.

Remember there is no one way to do this. Your journey is unique to you and the relationship you develop with God will be unique.

So, do whatever suits you, whatever it takes to carve out time with God in your life. But remember what the aim is:

**To spend quiet time with God, time that allows you to be silent and
LISTEN to the One who loves you more than life itself.**

May God bless you on your Lenten journey with God and may you find God filling your wilderness experience with a showering of God's grace and love.

Father Perry +