

# *Lenten Reflections*

*February 27, 2020*



*St Francis Receiving the Stigmata – El Greco – Public Domain*

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/6457/saint-francis-receiving-the-stigmata-2/>

Today's scripture readings speak to me about the challenges and hard times that everyone encounters in life. The readings do not focus on the burden and challenges but instead on the opportunities to grow and face these challenges with willingness and courage. The life we are often meant to live is not an easy one, but this is not to say that it will not have many wonderful moments and times to cherish. These hard times are only made easier when we choose how we want to accept and receive them.

*"I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life."*

This is about our willingness to accept what God has to offer and to do so without hesitations or reluctance. This life is also temporary and so our challenges here are all so minor in comparison to what is waiting for us. As I adventure farther into life, I have found this to continue to be quite true and unflinching: challenges do present themselves in life but once overcome they are a true blessing.

Lent is often a wonderful time for a fresh start, a new outlook on life, and a time for reflection. During this time, I like to think about the things that are a part of my life and define who I am. Our life worth is truly shown by what we do, and our actions are an example to others of the person we are. Today's Gospel highlights this: "What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?" We should not put ourselves through anything in life that is not best for us and will not bring us meaningful happiness. We should look at each opportunity or choice in life and reflect on how it will benefit our long-term plan for life.

*Marian Peters, Graduate from School of Education, Class of 2019*

## Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Lectionary: 220

Reading 1 [DT 30:15-20](#)

Moses said to the people:

“Today I have set before you  
life and prosperity, death and doom.

If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God,  
which I enjoin on you today,

loving him, and walking in his ways,  
and keeping his commandments, statutes and decrees,  
you will live and grow numerous,  
and the LORD, your God,

will bless you in the land you are entering to occupy.

If, however, you turn away your hearts and will not listen,  
but are led astray and adore and serve other gods,

I tell you now that you will certainly perish;

you will not have a long life

on the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and occupy.

I call heaven and earth today to witness against you:

I have set before you life and death,  
the blessing and the curse.

Choose life, then,

that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God,  
heeding his voice, and holding fast to him.

For that will mean life for you,

a long life for you to live on the land that the LORD swore  
he would give to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

**Responsorial Psalm** [1:1-2, 3, 4 AND 6](#)

R. (40:5a) Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

Blessed the man who follows not  
the counsel of the wicked

Nor walks in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the company of the insolent,

But delights in the law of the LORD  
and meditates on his law day and night.

R. Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

He is like a tree

planted near running water,

That yields its fruit in due season,

and whose leaves never fade.

Whatever he does, prospers.

R. Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

Not so the wicked, not so;  
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.  
For the LORD watches over the way of the just,  
but the way of the wicked vanishes.  
R. Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

**Verse Before The Gospel**      [MT 4:17](#)

Repent, says the Lord;  
the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**Gospel** [LK 9:22-25](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:  
“The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected  
by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,  
and be killed and on the third day be raised.”

Then he said to all,  
“If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself  
and take up his cross daily and follow me.  
For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it,  
but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.  
What profit is there for one to gain the whole world  
yet lose or forfeit himself?”