

Lenten Reflections

March 26, 2020



St Francis Receiving the Stigmata – El Greco – Public Domain

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

The season of Lent is a time to reflect on our journey with God. As we move through Lent, and through life, we make small decisions every day. What to eat, what to watch, what to read, who to spend our time with, what social media accounts to follow... And occasionally we make big decisions - What should I major in, where should I live, should I get married, should I have a child, should I change careers... Eventually, these decisions add up, and they end up defining who we are - how others see us and how we see ourselves. Lent is an opportunity to take stock of what decisions we've been making and see where God might be calling us for a course correction.

A spiritual advisor once told me to imagine my spiritual journey through life as though I was riding a tandem bicycle with Jesus. A tandem bike is a bicycle built for two - it has two seats and two sets of pedals, but by its very nature the steering can only be controlled by the person in the front seat.

This powerful metaphor has stuck with me as I've gone through life and made major (and minor) life decisions. God is always with us - the question is, where is He sitting? Are you in the front seat, steering where you'd like to, with Jesus pumping away in the back, unseen and easy to forget, hanging on for dear life, trying to get your attention? Or are you willing to let Jesus ride in the front, steering you where He will, as you pump along and follow, knowing He will lead you by the right path?

This Lent, as we are reminded that God has given his only Son to help us, I challenge you to think of yourself on that bicycle. Where are you trying to go? More importantly, where does God want you to go? And most importantly, can you use this time of Lent to let Jesus ride up front and steer you to new paths?

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Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Lectionary: 247

Reading 1 [Ex 32:7-14](#)

The LORD said to Moses,
“Go down at once to your people
whom you brought out of the land of Egypt,
for they have become depraved.
They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them,
making for themselves a molten calf and worshiping it,
sacrificing to it and crying out,
‘This is your God, O Israel,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt!’
The LORD said to Moses,
“I see how stiff-necked this people is.
Let me alone, then,
that my wrath may blaze up against them to consume them.
Then I will make of you a great nation.”

But Moses implored the LORD, his God, saying,
“Why, O LORD, should your wrath blaze up against your own people,
whom you brought out of the land of Egypt
with such great power and with so strong a hand?
Why should the Egyptians say,
‘With evil intent he brought them out,
that he might kill them in the mountains
and exterminate them from the face of the earth’?
Let your blazing wrath die down;
relent in punishing your people.
Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel,
and how you swore to them by your own self, saying,
‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky;
and all this land that I promised,
I will give your descendants as their perpetual heritage.’”
So the LORD relented in the punishment
he had threatened to inflict on his people.

Responsorial Psalm [106:19-20, 21-22, 23](#)

(4a) Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.
Our fathers made a calf in Horeb
and adored a molten image;
They exchanged their glory
for the image of a grass-eating bullock.
R. Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.
They forgot the God who had saved them,

who had done great deeds in Egypt,
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,
terrible things at the Red Sea.

R. Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.
Then he spoke of exterminating them,
but Moses, his chosen one,
Withstood him in the breach
to turn back his destructive wrath.
R. Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.

Verse Before the Gospel [Jn 3:16](#)

God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,
so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

Gospel [Jn 5:31-47](#)

Jesus said to the Jews:

“If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is not true.
But there is another who testifies on my behalf,
and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true.
You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth.
I do not accept human testimony,
but I say this so that you may be saved.
He was a burning and shining lamp,
and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light.
But I have testimony greater than John’s.
The works that the Father gave me to accomplish,
these works that I perform testify on my behalf
that the Father has sent me.
Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf.
But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form,
and you do not have his word remaining in you,
because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent.
You search the Scriptures,
because you think you have eternal life through them;
even they testify on my behalf.
But you do not want to come to me to have life.

“I do not accept human praise;
moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you.
I came in the name of my Father,
but you do not accept me;
yet if another comes in his own name,
you will accept him.
How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another
and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God?

Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father:
the one who will accuse you is Moses,
in whom you have placed your hope.
For if you had believed Moses,
you would have believed me,
because he wrote about me.
But if you do not believe his writings,
how will you believe my words?"