

CONFESSING CHRIST - DAILY LECTIONARY AND PRAYERS
LENT, 2013

Frederick R. Trost and Colleen Darling, Editors

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“So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that are among you...’
So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had...”

(Genesis 35:2,4)

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| Ash Wednesday, 2/13 | Psalm 51:1-4 +1984, Roland H. Bainton | Karl C. & Elizabeth Schaffenburg Sheboygan, WI |
| Thursday, 2/14 | Psalm 51:6-9 1967, Latin America Nuclear Free Zone Treaty | Nikolaus & Anne Schneider Dusseldorf, Germany |
| Friday, 2/15 | Psalm 51:10-12 *1564, Galileo *1820, Susan B. Anthony | Gerald Schrankler Fond du Lac, WI |
| Saturday, 2/16 | Psalm 51:15-17 +1977, Janani Luwum Uganda | Lothar Schreiner Wuppertal, Germany |
| First Sunday in Lent (Invocavit) 2/17 | Luke 4:1-13 | Daniel Ray Schroeder North Granby, CT |
| Monday, 2/18 | Hosea 14:1-3 +1546, Martin Luther | Ralph Schultz, Jr. Waukesha, WI |

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| Tuesday, 2/19 | Hosea 14:4-7 1942, Japanese-American relocation camps established in the United States | Carl F. Schultz, Jr. Glastonbury, CT |
| Wednesday, 2/20 | Hosea 14:8-9 | Catherine Marie Shetler Quarryville, PA |
| Thursday, 2/21 | Romans 12:1-2 | John Silliman Shamokin, PA |
| Friday, 2/22 | Romans 12:3-8 +1943, Sophie Scholl, Hans School and Christoph Probst White Rose Society | James Silver Middleton, CT |
| Saturday, 2/23 | Romans 12:9-21 *1868, W.E.B. DuBois | Betsy Skinner Archer, FL |
| Second Sunday in Lent (Reminiscere) 2/24 | Psalms 27:1-6 | David & Connie Slater Dover, NH |
| Monday, 2/25 | Psalms 27:7-10 | Samuel Slie West Haven, CT |
| Tuesday, 2/26 | Psalms 27:11-14 1529, Diet of Speyer +1969, Karl Jaspers | Norman R. Small Gilmanton, NH |
| Wednesday, 2/27 | Galatians 1:3-10 1973, Wounded Knee | Stephen A. Small West Boylston, MA |
| Thursday, 2/28 | Galatians 3:23-29 +1551, Martin Butzer | Sally S. Smith Sonora, CA |
| Friday, 3/01 (World Day of Prayer) | Matthew 7:7-8 1522, Luther leaves the Wartburg | Toni T. Smith Chester, CT |

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| Saturday, 3/02 | Luke 11:2-4 +1791, John Wesley | Jeannette Solimine Colfax, WI |
| Third Sunday in Lent (Oculi) 3/03 | Luke 13:1-9 | Scott Spencer Rehoboth, MA |
| Monday, 3/04 | Isaiah 55:1-2 | Peter B. St. Martin Grand Rapids, MI |
| Tuesday, 3/05 | Isaiah 55:6-9 | Sharon Stier West Bend, WI |
| Wednesday, 3/06 | Isaiah 55:10-13 +1274, Thomas Aquinas +1585, Zacharias Ursinus | Gary Stillwell Janesville, WI |
| Thursday, 3/07 | Psalms 63:1-4 | Karl Strohmeier Lenexa, KS |
| Friday, 3/08 | Ephesians 2:1-10 | James Tilbe Raynham, MA |
| Saturday, 3/09 | Ephesians 3:1-6 | Gary Titusdahl Cannon Falls, MN |
| Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare), 3/10 | Luke 15:1-7 1872, First Protestant Church in Japan +1913, Harriet Tubman 1987, Conscientious objection declared a human right by the United Nations | Harley C.W. & Shirley Tretow Berlin, WI |
| Monday, 3/11 | 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 | Ann Trost Grand Rapids, MI |

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| Tuesday, 3/12 | Ephesians 4:1-6 *1607, Paul Gerhardt +1977, Rutilio Grande, El Salvador | Frederick & Louise Trost Elkhart Lake, WI |
| Wednesday, 3/13 | Ephesians 4:11-16 | Jonathan H. Trost Rochester, NY |
| Thursday, 3/14 | Colossians 3:1-4 *1879, Albert Einstein | Marianne Trost Fountain Hills, AZ |
| Friday, 3/15 | Philippians 2:1-4 | Sarah E. Trost Milwaukee, WI |
| Saturday, 3/16 | Philippians 2:5-13 | John Van Epps Guilford, CT |
| Fifth Sunday in Lent (Judica), 3/17 | Psalm 126 +1970, Gunther Dehn | Edward A. Walker Dennis, MA |
| Monday, 3/18 | Psalm 25:1-5 +386, Cyril of Jerusalem | John R. & Eleanor Weiler Bethlehem, PA |
| Tuesday, 3/19 | Psalm 25:6-10 | Roger & Frances Wentz Black River Falls, WI |
| Wednesday, 3/20 | Matthew 25:31-36 | Timothy Wepner Newton, NC |
| Thursday, 3/21 | Matthew 25:37-46 *1685, Johann Sebastian Bach 1960, Sharpeville Massacre, South Africa 1965, Selma March to Montgomery, AL | John A. Werley Malone, NY |
| Friday, 3/22 | 1 Thessalonians 11-13 +1785, Jonathan Edwards | Glenn W. Wernecke Sun City, AZ |
| Saturday, 3/23 | 1 Timothy 1:12-17 | Fritz West Marine on St. Croix, MN |

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| Palm Sunday, 3/24 | Luke 19:28-40 +1980, Oscar Romero | Rudolf Weth Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany |
| Monday of Holy Week, 3/25 | Luke 19:41-42, 45-48 | Jean T. Whitcomb Paxton, NY |
| Tuesday of Holy Week, 3/26 | Luke 20:9-19 | David Yochum Whitewater, WI |
| Wednesday of Holy Week, 3/27 | Luke 20:20-26 +1327, Meister Eckhart | Nathaniel Yordon Norwalk, CT |
| Maundy Thursday, 3/28 | John 13:1-21 +1985, Marc Chagall | Elga Zachau Bochum, Germany |
| Good Friday, 3/29 | John 18:1-19:37 +1788, Charles Wesley | Leonard Zecchini Lyndeborough, NH |
| Holy Saturday, 3/30 | John 19:38-42 | Walter Ziegenhals Burlington, NC |

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PRAYERS AND RESOURCES FOR LENT, 2013

Morning Prayers:

Almighty and Everlasting God, with whom nothing is obscure, nothing dark, send forth your light into our hearts that we may perceive your law for us and, walking in your way, may fall into no sin; through your beloved Son and our beloved example, Jesus Christ.

(Gregory the Great, c. 540-604)

(It is said that St. Gregory I was nurtured "as a saint in the midst of saints." Following the death of his father, his mother devoted herself to "the cloistral life." Gregory engaged in study of the law, and devoured the writings of the saints, particularly Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose. He is believed to have built six cloisters in Sicily and one (St. Andrew's) in his own home in Rome. There, he lived under the Benedictine Rule. He was a great advocate of a "contemplative life." In the year 590, he was elected pope and soon afterwards he faced the challenges of war and peace, particularly the necessity of defending Rome from the Lombards. Gregory immersed himself in works of benevolence, making provisions for orphans, the sick and destitute, while also addressing doctrinal matters such as the dispute with the Donatists and engaging in the reform of liturgy.)

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O God, by whom the humble-minded are guided in judgment, and light rises up in darkness for the faithful, grant us in all our doubts and perplexities the grace to ask what you would have us do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

(William Bright, 1824-1901)

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Direct, O God, suggest this day, All we design or do or say,
That all our powers, with all their might, In your sole glory may unite.

(Thomas Ken, 1637-1711)

(Thomas Ken is the composer of numerous hymns of the Church including the morning hymn, "Awake, my soul, and with the sun" and the famous evening hymn, "All Praise to Thee, my God, this night." His hymns often had numerous stanzas. Some of them came to be re-arranged in modern times; divided into distinct hymns that stood on their own and have been joyfully sung by succeeding generations. Thomas Ken was known as a courageous preacher and a benevolent soul who devoted himself to the well-being of others, including impoverished Huguenot refugees.)

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O God, renew our spirits by your Holy Spirit, and draw our hearts this morning unto yourself, that our work may not be a burden, but a delight; and give us such a mighty love to you as may sweeten all our obedience. Let us not serve with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with cheerfulness and gladness, as children, delighting ourselves in you and rejoicing in your wishes for the sake of Jesus Christ.

(Benjamin Jenks, 1646-1724)

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Evening Prayers:

Lighten our darkness,... O Lord, and by your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of your only Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

(Gelasian Sacramentary, 494)

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Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we, who are fatigued by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may repose upon your eternal changelessness; through the everlasting Christ our Lord.

(Gelasian Sacramentary, 494)

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Take from us now, O God, all tediousness of spirit, all impatience and un-quietness. Let us possess ourselves in patience, and resign our souls and bodies into your hands, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Jeremy Taylor, 1613-1667)

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All our life thy hand hath led us, and we thank thee for thy care;
Thou hast warmed and clothed and fed us—listen to our evening prayer.

May our sins be all forgiven, bless the friends we love so well;
Take us when we die to heaven, happy there with thee to dwell.

(Mary Lundie Duncan, 1814-1840)

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O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(John Henry Newman, 1801-1890)

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Can We Risk It?

We have been sent dangerously by God's address—called by name, entrusted with risky words, and empowered with authority. We are to tell the truth openly, work for justice, and stand in solidarity with our neighbors. The cost is high, but the purposes are those of the Holy God.

(Walter Brueggemann in Prayers for a Privileged People, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2008)

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Old Stories Become New Songs (On reading 1 and 2 Samuel):

We love to tell the old, old story.

We love to sing the old, old song

Of your saving deeds of mercy and
freedom and
healing and
newness.

We know about Exodus freedom

And dancing tambourines.

We know about land and huge clusters of grapes.

We know about rivers of water and

rivers of oil.

We know about the strangeness that

the blind see,

the lame walk,

the lepers are cleansed,

the dead are raised,

the poor rejoice.

We know. Give us courage to

trust what we know and to

obey what we hope.

We know that the old, old story—in our telling—becomes

A new, dangerous, transforming song. And so we sing!

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A Time to Weep:

The mind revolts at the thought of it. A time to weep? A time? Never. This is the good-time generation, the land of jacuzzis and early retirement, the world of aspirin and analgesics, of alcohol and cocaine. This is the age of Disneyland and Six Flags over Anywhere and Everywhere. The signs are clear: suffering is not welcome here. But do not be fooled.

On this planet, psychic numbing has been raised to high art. This people avoids pain and misery. In others as well as in themselves, at all costs. This is not a people who braves grief in the face and stares it down. No, this people dedicates itself to the elimination of pain—its own—and the aversion of pain—everyone else's. But grief comes nevertheless.

Tears fall despite the fact that we resist them so strongly...

Unfortunately, few of us see our weepings as a spiritual gift or a matter of divine design. But we are wrong. Weeping is very holy and life-giving. It sounds alarms for a society and wisens the soul of the individual. "Ecclesiastes" may be nowhere more correct than here. There is definitely a time for weeping. If we do not weep on the personal level, we shall never understand humanity around us. If we do not weep on the public level, we are less than human ourselves.

The Rabbi Honokh said it well: "The real exile of Israel in Egypt was that they had learned to endure it." There are, in other words, some things that ought not to be endured. There are some things worth weeping about lest we lose our sense of self. We must always cope with evil, of course, but we must never adjust to it. We must stay eternally restless for justice, for joy. Restless enough to cry out in pain when the world lacks them...

(Joan Chittister in There is a Season, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1995)

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Light... Beyond All Light:

Who in this mortal life would see the Light that is beyond all light,
Beholds it best by going forth into the darkness of the Night.

(Angelus Silesius, 1624-1677)

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Faith in the Dawn:

Faith in the dawn arises from the faith that God is good and just. When one believes this, one knows that the contradictions of life are neither final nor ultimate. One can walk through the dark night with the radiant conviction that all things work together for good for those that love God. Even the most starless midnight may herald the dawn of some great fulfillment.

(Martin Luther King, Jr., 1929-1968)

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Poverty:

Poverty is a strange and elusive thing. I have tried to write about it, its joys and its sorrows, for twenty years now; I could probably write about it for another twenty years without conveying what I feel about it as well as I would like. I condemn poverty and I advocate it; poverty is simple and complex at once; it is a social phenomenon and a personal matter. It is a paradox.

St. Francis was “the little poor man” and none was more joyful than he; yet Francis began with tears, with fear and trembling, hiding in a cave from his irate father. He had expropriated some of his father’s goods (which he considered his rightful inheritance) in order to repair a church and rectory where he meant to live. It was only later that he came to love Lady Poverty. He took it little by little; it seemed to grow on him. Perhaps kissing the leper was the great step that freed him not only from fastidiousness and a fear of disease but from attachment to worldly goods as well.

Sometimes it takes but one step. We would like to think so. And yet the older I get, the more I see that life is made up of many steps, and they are very small affairs, not giant strides. I have “kissed a leper,” not once but twice—consciously—and I cannot say I am much the better for it...

(Dorothy Day, “Works of Mercy” in Dorothy Day: Selected Writings,
Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1996)

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A World of the Walking Wounded:

(The) world, from South Africa to Miami to Buffalo Center, Iowa, is a world of the walking wounded, the bewildered, the endangered, the hurt and the lost. It includes you and me. When you come, pastor, offering to care for our souls that we may care for the soul of the church and the church may care for the soul of the world, remind us that the world’s soulfulness is wounded. Make it clear that you come not as a professional to cure our wounds, but to

help us cry and laugh and sing, nurturing our souls, increasing depth and genuineness, but broaden our soul also by Word and Sacrament to make room for the invasion of that God who folded self back into the world in Jesus Christ, and who is urgent to hold us in that folding whose coming changes the flow of the stream of our history and of all history forever. So simple and so profound and so unpredictable is the renaissance of faith.

(Browne Barr, 1917-2009, retired member Confessing Christ Board of Directors)

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Learning is Life:

According to an ancient Hebrew saying, the world rests upon three pillars: upon learning, upon worship, and upon charity. Learning meant having a share in divine wisdom; the object of worship was the Creator; charity meant both openness to and active sympathy with our (neighbor's) suffering. In our civilization, these pillars become instruments. Learning is pursued in order to attain power; charity is done not because it is holy, but because it is useful for public relations. And the supreme object of our worship and adoration is our own ego.

An extreme crisis calls for radical efforts, for a radical reorientation. Power is an instrument, not the end of living. Learning, worship, charity are ends, not means. It is wrong to define education as "preparation" for life. Learning is life, a supreme experience of living, a climax of existence.

The teacher is more than a technician. He (or she) is the representative as well as the interpreter of humankind's most sacred possessions... By learning,... I mean the very act of study, of being involved in wisdom.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel in The Insecurity of Freedom: Essays on Human Existence,
New York, Schocken Books, 1972)

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Jesus Living Beyond the Temple:

In Jesus of Nazareth something happened outside the temple. After death and resurrection, the story is carried beyond the temple to the pagans. Worship of God as the Holy can no longer be confined to temples made with hands. God proved to be struggling with all humanity, especially those who had been excluded from being human. People in the Gentile world had been battling for solutions to their historical destiny... Jesus included them. The church also included them and thus thrust itself deep into history... It is impossible from the Christian perspective to speak of Jesus as though his cause were a matter of sheer humanism. In his power struggle, God's power is at stake. The fulfillment of the great and first commandment is interdependent with the second in that God's presence is involved in the human being...

(Frederick Herzog in Justice Church; The New Function of the Church in North American Christianity,
Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1980)

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Christian Community:

Christian community... is a gift of God that we cannot claim. Only God knows the real state of our fellowship... What may appear weak and trifling to us may be great and glorious to God. Just as the Christian should not be constantly feeling his (or her) spiritual pulse, so, too, the Christian community has not been given to us by God for us to be constantly taking its temperature. The more thankfully we daily receive what is given to us, the more surely and steadily will fellowship increase and grow from day to day as God pleases.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945)

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Drone Strikes:

Recently,...“the United Nations announced an investigation into the legality of drones and their deadly toll on the innocent. According to UN special rapporteur Ben Emmerson: ‘The central objective of the investigation... is to look at the evidence that drone strikes and other forms of remote targeted killing have caused disproportionate civilian casualties in some instances... It’s both right as a matter of principle, and inevitable as a matter of political reality, that the international community should now be focusing attention on the standards applicable to this technological development.’” (Bill Moyers in “Nation of Change,” January, 2013)

(And what of the Church? – ed.)

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Nuclear Weapons:

“Nuclear weapons should not really be viewed as weapons at all. They are insanely destructive devices of annihilation, not only immoral, but irrational. They cannot be used without the most flagrant violations of the laws of warfare: killing indiscriminately and causing unnecessary suffering. Their effects cannot be contained in time or space. They harm not only present generations; they threaten to foreclose the future altogether. Archbishop Desmond Tutu,... regards nuclear weapons as an ‘obscenity.’ They are also extraordinarily expensive, having cost the US alone more than \$7.5 trillion since the onset of the Nuclear Age, and they invite others to mimic our irresponsible behavior...” (Richard Falk and David Krieger, “Truthout,” January 16, 2013)

(And what saith the Church? – ed.)

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Theological and Homiletical Courage:

I thank you, dear God, that you have not hidden from me your holy Word. Help me to live by it, to withstand every trial and overcome every temptation... Bless me... that I may rightly preach the gospel to the souls entrusted to my care. When undue timidity prevents me from speaking... overrule it; but when I am too facile with your Word, close my mouth...

(Hans Asmussen in "Das Tägliche Wort", quoted in John Doberstein, Minister's Prayer Book: An Order of Prayers and Readings, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1986)

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You are invited to refer to the Confessing Christ website at the following address: <http://confessingchrist.net>

Confessing Christ materials are being prepared at the Mission House Center, Lakeland College. Those no longer wishing to receive materials or those with address changes should contact Colleen Darling, Lakeland College, P.O. Box 359, Sheboygan, WI 53082-0359, by e-mail darlingca@lakeland.edu or by calling 920-565-1538.

"For no one can lay foundation other than the one that has been laid: that foundation is Jesus Christ."

(1 Cor. 3:11, NRSV)