



# Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Lent (C)  
March 20, 2022

## Appreciating God's Patience

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

God is very patient, but his patience doesn't last forever.

In the Old Testament, after God spoke to Abraham and Lot's subsequent rebellion, some 500 years passed before God revealed himself again—this time to Moses. God takes the first step toward Abraham and, when his descendants turned away, he steps back. He reached out again to Moses and revealed his name so that Moses could enter into a personal relationship with him and explain his name to others. God wants to be known by his people and by you!

### Sunday Readings

**Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15**

God replied to Moses: I am who I am... This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.

**1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12**

Whoever thinks he is standing secure should take care not to fall.

**Luke 13:1-9**

"Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future."

So here we learn that with this revelation of God comes a responsibility. He unveils his mysterious face, but he also desires a loving response and for us to witness about him to others.

Saint Paul makes it clear that God eventually ran out of patience with the Chosen People in the desert. After freeing the Israelites from Egypt with signs and wonders, giving them his law, and feeding them in the desert, they complained against him. Like the fig tree in the Gospel, he gave them ample time and multiple encores of his love and mercy. Yet eventually, his love took the form of tough love—forty years of desert wanderings.

Lent is another expression of God's patience toward us. He is once again sowing the seeds of conversion, hoping for the fruits of our change of heart—fruits of love, forgiveness, repentance, and renewal.

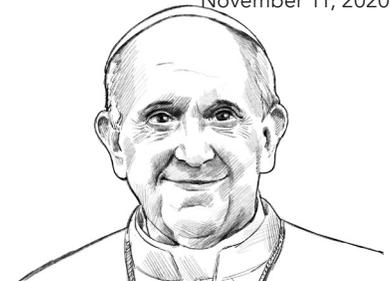
He gives time for his cultivating efforts to take effect and for fruit to appear, but our life on earth is finite, so that time isn't unlimited. +

***God wants to be known by his people and by you!***

### A Word from Pope Francis

Fasting, prayer and almsgiving...express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (fasting), concern and loving care for the poor (almsgiving), and childlike dialogue with the Father (prayer) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope, and effective charity.

—Lenten message for 2021, November 11, 2020



### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Is there a particular way I "desire evil things," as in the second reading?
- God shows me patience and mercy yet again this year. How shall I respond?

# A Glorious Celebration!

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSSR

Ask most Catholics about Lent and they'll tell you it lasts forty days. It starts on Ash Wednesday. They'll tell you it's a time to intensify our prayer, fasting, and good works. Some will say it's a time for repentance and reconciliation. There's no meat on Fridays, so the local Knights of Columbus fish fry is popular. It's the time allotted to prepare for Easter. It's about sacrifice....Lent is certainly about all of this, but there's something more, especially when it comes to the RCIA.

Looking for a different take on Lent? Tune in to your parish's RCIA program. In 1972, with the promulgation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Lent was resituated in the context of the catechumenal process, reconnecting it to the hard work of getting ready to accept the faith and learning to live it well. Catechumens and candidates journey through a process that embodies catechesis and accompaniment, preparation for the Easter sacraments and encouragement for living daily the mysteries of our Catholic faith.

This Lent, pay attention to and take part in the experience of three moments that are integral to the process of becoming a Catholic Christian through the RCIA: election, scrutinies, and the reception of sacraments. Long before the first Sunday of Lent and the rite of election, the catechumens have been preparing, studying, sharing, and living the faith they long to fully embrace.



They have undergone a conversion and have a clear understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ. So, they are invited to present their names for enrollment and are called to the Easter sacraments by the local ordinary. It's a dramatic moment that takes place at a cathedral or other convenient location. At the rite of election, we witness the power of God's action in people's lives as so many come forward for enrollment. The catechumens are now called *elect*. The three Sundays of Lent set aside for the scrutinies call the elect to deeper conversion. At a parish Mass, with Scripture reflections on the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, and Lazarus as the backdrop, the elect are

invited to experience what it means to be delivered from sin and its effects.

Washed in baptism, anointed in confirmation, and fed in Eucharist, all in the paschal light of the Easter Vigil, the elect become members of God's family in the Church. This is one of the most glorious celebrations within the Church!

Talk with your pastor or parish's RCIA/faith formation coordinator to find out when these events will take place and how you might prepare for and participate in them. Spending the forty days of Lent with your parish's RCIA members who are on the path to become purified and sanctified can be life-changing, for them and for you. +

***One way to grow in faith during these forty days is to take part in your parish's RCIA process.***

## PRAYER

*Lord, you are patient with me and never withhold your love and mercy from me. Strengthen me with your grace to become fully human, fully alive in the world.*

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

March 21–26

**Monday**, Lenten Weekday:  
2 Kgs 5:1–15ab / Lk 4:24–30

**Tuesday**, Lenten Weekday:  
Dn 3:25, 34–43 / Mt 18:21–35

**Wednesday**, Lenten Weekday:  
Dt 4:1, 5–9 / Mt 5:17–19

**Thursday**, Lenten Weekday:  
Jer 7:23–28 / Lk 11:14–23

**Friday**, The Annunciation of the Lord:  
Is 7:10–14; 8:10 / Heb 10:4–10 /  
Lk 1:26–38

**Saturday**, Lenten Weekday:  
Hos 6:1–6 / Lk 18:9–14

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