

**Sunday, Mar 26, 2023**

### Hints of resurrection

While the Hebrew scripture written before Jesus lived doesn't explicitly speak of resurrection in the same way it is spoken of after Jesus is raised from the dead, there are certainly rumors and whispers. Perhaps the most explicit references are in chapter 37 of Ezekiel, where God, working through the prophet, raises a valley of dry bones to new life and promises to restore them to the promised land after their captivity in Babylon centuries before Christ. Saint Jerome called the vision of the valley of bones a "simile" of the Resurrection to come. There's hope for these old bones yet!

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45 (34). *"Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people!"*

**Monday, Mar 27, 2023**

### A profile in courage

In the last week of Women's History Month, here's another Catholic woman who made history: Servant of God Catherine de Hueck Doherty (1896-1985). Born wealthy in Russia, she escaped the Russian Revolution and fled to Canada. During the Great Depression, she founded Friendship House, a Catholic outreach movement to serve the poor and promote interracial friendship—a movement that started in Toronto and spread to Harlem, Chicago, Washington D.C., and Portland, Oregon. As a nation and a world community, we face trials comparable to the ones Doherty faced. She responded with courage, generosity, love, and gospel witness. Let us do the same!

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11 (251). *"Go, and from now on do not sin any more."*

**Tuesday, Mar 28, 2023**

### 'Tis a gift to be simple

Happy birthday to Saint John Neumann today—nicknamed the "little bishop" not only for his stature but for the humility that came from his Redemptorist vow of poverty, which he honored even after becoming bishop of Philadelphia. Neumann's simplicity invites rich reflection for Lent. "Our great mistake is that we allow ourselves to be deceived by the spirit of worldly shrewdness, the desire for fame, and the love of comfort," he wrote to a fellow priest. "The principles of faith fade out of our hearts in proportion as we allow the principles of the world to come in." Simplify your life to make more room for what feeds your faith.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30 (252). *"You belong to this world, but I do not belong to this world."*

**Wednesday, Mar 29, 2023**

### Redemption is at hand

Though they, along with other ancient societies, engaged in some forms of household slavery, Jews as a general rule frowned upon the institution. Slaves who were not Jewish were to be offered conversion to Judaism and if they became Jews, immediately freed. Jews were also required to redeem Jewish slaves from non-Jewish owners. Memory of their own captivity in Egypt and Babylonia loomed large, and they resented Jesus promising to free them. But when Jesus spoke of the truth setting Jews free, he was talking about another kind of enslavement, the kind we all fall

into through unskillful actions, behaviors, habits, compulsions. Look honestly at what might be restricting your inner freedom and ask Jesus to redeem you.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; John 8:31-42 (253). *"We are descendants of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How can you say, 'You will become free'?"*

**Thursday, Mar 30, 2023**

### Help your unbelief

Can a believer doubt? It can be a relief to learn that a whole school of thought among Catholic theologians asserts that doubt, while seemingly corrosive, can actually bolster faith in the end. Doubt can lead to exploration, which often leads to better understanding, greater clarity, or sometimes simply a willingness to not know, to live without all questions fully answered, leaning into religious practice with an open heart. Most would call that an adult faith. What questions nag at you? Doubt, dig, and remain open to God.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59 (254). *"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death."*

**Friday, Mar 31, 2023**

### Miles to go

Women's History Month concludes today, but the work of ensuring the rights of women continues. In a November 2022 press conference, Pope Francis acknowledged that more work needs to be done. "We have to tell the truth," the pope said. "The fight for women's rights is an ongoing fight." This includes equality in public life and also "equality of opportunities." How might we each open a door of opportunity for women in our own families, parishes, neighborhoods, schools, or offices?

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42 (255). *"If I do not perform my Father's works, do not believe me; but if I perform them, even if you do not believe me, believe the works."*

**Saturday, Apr 01, 2023**

### A well-traveled pilgrim helped shape Holy Week

Holy Week begins tomorrow. It's in the description of Jesus' last week—immediately ahead of his death and Resurrection—that all four gospels resemble each other the most. The church's liturgical celebration of Holy Week, however, was a late development. Originally, Christians had only a single *Pascha* liturgy to observe Jesus' suffering, death, and Resurrection. Specific Holy Week liturgies for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday grew from individual shrines in Jerusalem where each event occurred. Thanks to a detailed travel journal, written in 383 by a remarkable woman pilgrim to the Holy Land named Egeria, these liturgies began to take shape. As Holy Week begins, let's not only honor the women at the empty tomb but the woman who helped define Holy Week.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56 (256). *"He prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation."*

*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time*



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