

How to use 3+2?



This little booklet is designed to help you improve your friendship with Jesus and to fall in love with Him. You can read for 3 minutes, and then talk to Jesus directly for 2 minutes. Your daily mental prayer will also help you be kinder with your siblings, become a good friend, get better grades and grow in your desire to become a saint.

Three + Two

Lent

fast · give · pray

Lent-Holy week 2015

April 5. Easter Sunday – Solemnity

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don’t know where they put him.”

So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Forge*, 660: The Lord’s triumph, on the day of the Resurrection, is final. Where are the soldiers the rulers posted there? Where are the seals that were fixed to the stone of the tomb? Where are those who condemned the Master? where are those who crucified Jesus? He is victorious, and faced with his victory those poor wretches have all taken flight.

Be filled with hope: Jesus Christ is always victorious.

We are at the beginning of Lent: a time of penance, purification and conversion. It is not an easy program, but then Christianity is not an easy way of life. It is not enough just to be in the Church, letting the years roll by. In our life, in the life of Christians, our first conversion — that unique moment which each of us remembers, when we clearly understood everything the Lord was asking of us — is certainly very significant. But the later conversions are even more important, and they are increasingly demanding. To facilitate the work of grace in these conversions, we need to keep our soul young; we have to call upon our Lord, know how to listen to him and, having found out what has gone wrong, know how to ask his pardon.

“If you call upon me, I will listen to you,” we read in this Sunday’s liturgy. Isn’t it wonderful how God cares for us and is always ready to listen to us — waiting for man to speak? He hears us at all times, but particularly now. Our heart is ready and we have made up our minds to purify ourselves. He hears us and will not disregard the petition of a “humble and contrite heart.”

SAINT JOSEMARIA. Christ is passing by, n.57.

February 18th. Ash Wednesday

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: "Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 211: In the deep pit opened by your humility, let penance bury your negligences, offences and sins. Just as the gardener buries rotten fruit, dried twigs and fallen leaves at the foot of the very trees which produced them. And so what was useless, what was even harmful, can make a real contribution to a new fruitfulness.

From the falls learn to draw strength: from death, life.

April 4. Holy Saturday - Easter Vigil

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. The guards were shaken with fear of him and became like dead men. Then the angel said to the women in reply, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.' Behold, I have told you." Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 584: Stir up that fire of faith. Christ is not a figure that has passed. He is not a memory that is lost in history.

He lives! 'Jesus Christus heri et hodie, ipse et in saecula', says Saint Paul. - 'Jesus Christ is the same to-day as he was yesterday and as he will be for ever'.

The Way, 586: God is the same as always. It is men of faith that are needed: and then, there will be a renewal of the wonders we read of in the Gospel.

Ecce non est abbreviata manus Domini, God's arm, his power, has not grown weaker!

his head, he handed over the spirit.

Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may (come to) believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: "Not a bone of it will be broken." And again another passage says: "They will look upon him whom they have pierced."

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.

Februaury 19th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: 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?"

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 204: Many who would willingly let themselves be nailed to a Cross before the astonished gaze of a thousand onlookers cannot bear with a christian spirit the pinpricks of each day! Think, then, which is the more heroic.

Februaury 20th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: The disciples of John approached Jesus and said, «Why do we and the Pharisees fast much, but your disciples do not fast?» Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 205: We were reading - you and I - the heroically ordinary life of that man of God. And we saw him fight whole months and years (what 'accounts' he kept in his particular examination!) at breakfast time: today he won, tomorrow he was beaten... He noted: 'Didn't take sugar...; did take sugar!'

May you and I too live our 'sugar tragedy'.

February 21st

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, «Follow me.» And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were at table with them. The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus said to them in reply, “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners.”

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 173: That joke, that witty remark held on the tip of your tongue; the cheerful smile for those who annoy you; that silence when you're unjustly accused; your friendly conversation with people whom you find boring and tactless; the daily effort to overlook one irritating detail or another in the persons who live with you... this, with perseverance, is indeed solid interior mortification.

The Way, 174: Don't say: 'That person gets on my nerves.' Think: 'That person sanctifies me.'

The Way, 176: How often you resolve to serve God in something, and you have to content yourself - you are so weak - with offering him the frustrated feeling of having failed to keep such a simple resolution!

The Way, 177: Don't waste the opportunity of yielding your own judgment. It's hard..., but how pleasing it is in the eyes of God!

April 3rd. Good Friday of the Lord's Passion

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.”

Now many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that he said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, “Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be,” in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled (that says): “They divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots.” This is what the soldiers did.

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I thirst.” There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, “It is finished.” And bowing

April 2nd. Holy Thursday

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well." Jesus said to him, "Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean, but not all." For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean."

So when he had washed their feet (and) put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

Febrary 22nd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him. After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 202: You are going to punish yourself voluntarily for your weakness and lack of generosity? Very good: but let it be a reasonable penance, imposed as it were, on an enemy who is at the same time your brother?

The Way, 205: We were reading - you and I - the heroically ordinary life of that man of God. And we saw him fight whole months and years (what 'accounts' he kept in his particular examination!) at breakfast time: today he won, tomorrow he was beaten... He noted: 'Didn't take sugar...; did take sugar!'

May you and I too live our 'sugar tragedy'.

Furrow, 132: You play around with temptations, you put yourself in danger, you fool around with your sight and with your imagination, you chat about... stupidities. And then you are anxious that doubts, scruples, confusion, sadness and discouragement might assail you.

—You must admit that you are not very consistent.

February 23rd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: «When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’

Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

April 1st

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over. On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?” He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The teacher says, “My appointed time draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the Passover with my disciples.”’”

The disciples then did as Jesus had ordered, and prepared the Passover. When it was evening, he reclined at table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, “Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” Deeply distressed at this, they began to say to him one after another, “Surely it is not I, Lord?” He said in reply, “He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born.” Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” He answered, “You have said so.”

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Forge*, 84: If there is anything in you that is out of harmony with God’s spirit, get rid of it straight away!

Think of the Apostles. They were not of much account, yet they could work miracles in the name of the Lord. Only Judas, who at one time may also have worked miracles, went astray by voluntarily separating himself from Christ, because he did not cut himself off violently and courageously from what was out of harmony with God’s spirit.

March 31st

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Reclining at table with his disciples, Jesus was deeply troubled and testified, «Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.» The disciples looked at one another, at a loss as to whom he meant. One of his disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at Jesus' side. So Simon Peter nodded to him to find out whom he meant. He leaned back against Jesus' chest and said to him, "Master, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I hand the morsel after I have dipped it." So he dipped the morsel and (took it and) handed it to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot.

After he took the morsel, Satan entered him. So Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." (Now) none of those reclining at table realized why he said this to him. Some thought that since Judas kept the money bag, Jesus had told him, "Buy what we need for the feast," or to give something to the poor. So he took the morsel and left at once. And it was night.

When Judas had left them, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. (If God is glorified in him,) God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. You will look for me, and as I told the Jews, 'Where I go you cannot come,' so now I say it to you. Simon Peter said to him, "Master, where are you going?" Jesus answered (him), "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, though you will follow later." Peter said to him, "Master, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Amen, amen, I say to you, the cock will not crow before you deny me three times."

Febrary 24th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: «In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one. If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 84: 'Lord, teach us to pray!' - And our Lord replied: 'When you pray, say: Pater noster, qui es in coelis... Our Father who art in heaven...'

What importance we must attach to vocal prayer!

Febrary 25th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: While still more people gathered in the crowd, Jesus said to them, «This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. At the judgment the queen of the south will rise with the men of this generation and she will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and there is something greater than Solomon here. At the judgment the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because at the preaching of Jonah they repented, and there is something greater than Jonah here.

February 26th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: «Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him. Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The way*, 85: Slowly. Consider what you are saying, to whom it is being said and by whom. For that hurried talk, without time for reflection, is just empty noise.

And with Saint Teresa, I will tell you that, however much you work your lips, I do not call it prayer.

The way, 90: You say that you don't know how to pray? Put yourself in the presence of God, and once you have said, 'Lord, I don't know how to pray!' rest assured that you have begun to do so.

The way, 91: You write: 'To pray is to talk with God. But about what?' About what? About Him, about yourself: joys, sorrows, successes and failures, noble ambitions, daily worries, weaknesses! And acts of thanksgiving and petitions: and Love and reparation.

In a word: to get to know him and to get to know yourself: 'to get acquainted!'

March 30th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Then Judas the Iscariot, one (of) his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor? He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions. So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." (The) large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 527: That woman in the house of Simon the leper in Bethany, who anoints the Master's head with precious ointment, reminds us of our duty to be generous in the worship of God.

All beauty, richness and majesty seem little to me.

And against those who attack the richness of sacred vessels, of vestments and altars, stands the praise given by Jesus: 'opus enim bonum operata est in me - she has acted well towards me'.

clothes, and led him off to crucify him.

As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha — which means Place of the Skull —, they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!” Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way.

From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “This one is calling for Elijah.” Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said, “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.” But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. Here all kneel and pause for a short time. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said, “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

Febrary 27th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: “I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven. “You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment. But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, Raqa, will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.”

Febrary 28th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: “You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

March 1st

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said. This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and do not be afraid.” And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, “Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 663: You ask me to suggest a cure for your sadness. I'll give you a prescription from an expert adviser, the Apostle Saint James: Tristatur aliquis vestrum, are you sad, my son? Oret! Pray! Try it and you will see.

March 2nd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: «Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

March 29th. Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus stood before the governor, Pontius Pilate, who questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?” But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them, “Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?” For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him.” The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They answered, “Barabbas!” Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” But he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” They only shouted the louder, “Let him be crucified!” When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves.” And the whole people said in reply, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own

March 28th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what Jesus had done began to believe in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing, nor do you consider that it is better for you that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish." He did not say this on his own, but since he was high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God. So from that day on they planned to kill him. So Jesus no longer walked about in public among the Jews, but he left for the region near the desert, to a town called Ephraim, and there he remained with his disciples.

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before Passover to purify themselves. They looked for Jesus and said to one another as they were in the temple area, "What do you think? That he will not come to the feast?"

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 556: The Way of the Cross. Here indeed you have a sturdy and fruitful devotion! Spend a few moments each Friday going over those fourteen points of our Lord's Passion and Death. I assure you that you will gain strength for the whole of the week.

March 3rd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens (hard to carry) and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels.

They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 342: Don't forget that before teaching one must act. 'Coepit facere et docere,' the holy scripture says of Jesus Christ: 'He began to do and to teach.'

First, action: so that you and I may learn.

The Way, 343: Work! When you feel the responsibility of professional work, the life of your soul will improve: and you will become more of a man, for you will lose your habit of 'picking holes' in everything.

The Way, 348: Your indolence, your carelessness, your laziness, are easygoing cowardice - so your conscience tells you continually, - but they are not 'the way'.

March 4th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: “As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the Twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.”

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached Jesus with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something. He said to her, “What do you wish? She answered him, “Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your kingdom.” Jesus said in reply, “You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the chalice that I am going to drink?” They said to him, “We can”. He replied, “My chalice you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right and at my left, this is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.

When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus summoned them and said: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

March 27th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: The Jews picked up rocks to stone him. Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from my Father. For which of these are you trying to stone me?” The Jews answered him, “We are not stoning you for a good work but for blasphemy. You, a man, are making yourself God.” Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, “You are gods”’? If it calls them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be set aside, can you say that the one whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world blasphemes because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? 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, so that you may realize (and understand) that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”

(Then) they tried again to arrest him; but he escaped from their power. He went back across the Jordan to the place where John first baptized, and there he remained. Many came to him and said, “John performed no sign, but everything John said about this man was true.” And many there began to believe in him.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 362: I have no need of miracles: there are more than enough for me in the Gospel. But I do need to see you fulfilling your duty and responding to grace.

The Way, 364: Ah, if you would only resolve to serve God ‘seriously’, with the same zeal with which you serve your ambition, your vanity, your sensuality!...

The Way, 365: If you feel the urge to be a leader, let this be your aim: to be last among your brothers; and among others, the first.

March 26th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to the Jews: «Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death.» (So) the Jews said to him, “Now we are sure that you are possessed. Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.’ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? Or the prophets, who died? Who do you make yourself out to be?” Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is worth nothing; but it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ You do not know him, but I know him. And if I should say that I do not know him, I would be like you a liar. But I do know him and I keep his word. Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.

So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM.” So they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 309: What depths of mercy there are in God’s justice! For, in the judgments of men, he who confesses his fault is punished: and in the Judgment of God, he is pardoned. Blessed be the holy Sacrament of Penance!

The Way, 310: ‘Put on the Lord Jesus Christ’, says Saint Paul to the Romans. It is in the Sacrament of Penance that you and I put on Jesus Christ and his merits.

March 5th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to the Pharisees: «There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.

When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.’ Abraham replied, ‘My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.’

He said, ‘Then I beg you, father, send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.’ But Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.’ He said, ‘Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ Then Abraham said, ‘If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.’”

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 198: These are the ripe fruits of the mortified soul: tolerance and understanding for the defects of others; intolerance for one’s own.

March 6th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: «Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’ They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?” They answered him, “He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.” Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes’?”

Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was speaking about them. And although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.

March 25th. The Annunciation of the Lord.

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end.” But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *Friends of God*, 25: Consider now the sublime moment when the Archangel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary the plans of the Most High. Our Mother listens, and asks a question to understand better what the Lord is asking of her. Then she gives her firm reply: Fiat! Be it done unto me according to thy word! This is the fruit of the best freedom of all, the freedom of deciding in favour of God.

March 24th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to the Pharisees: “I am going away and you will look for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come.” So the Jews said, “He is not going to kill himself, is he, because he said, ‘Where I am going you cannot come?’” He said to them, “You belong to what is below, I belong to what is above. You belong to this world, but I do not belong to this world. That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins.” So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “What I told you from the beginning. I have much to say about you in condemnation. But the one who sent me is true, and what I heard from him I tell the world.” They did not realize that he was speaking to them of the Father. So Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own, but I say only what the Father taught me. The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him.” Because he spoke this way, many came to believe in him.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 32: You will never be a leader if you see others only as stepping-stones to get ahead. You will be a leader if you are ambitious for the salvation of all mankind.

You can't turn your back on your fellow-men: you have to be anxious to make them happy.

The Way, 33: You never want to get to the heart of the matter. Sometimes, through politeness. Other times, most times, through fear of hurting yourself. Sometimes again, through fear of hurting others. And, always, through fear!

As long as you are so afraid of the truth you will never be a man of sound judgment, a man of worth.

March 7th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them”. So to them Jesus addressed this parable.

A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me’. So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son, treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers. So he got up and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly, bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’

March 8th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace. His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me.

At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days? But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken. While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 57: Get to know the holy Spirit, the great Stranger, on whom depends your sanctification.

Don't forget that you are God's temple. The Advocate is in the centre of your soul: listen to him and be docile to his inspirations.

March 23rd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.

But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more."

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 121: There is need for a crusade of manliness and purity to counteract and undo the savage work of those who think that man is a beast.

And that crusade is a matter for you.

The Way, 124: You, a doctor, an apostle, write to me: 'We all know by experience that we can be chaste, living vigilantly, frequenting the sacraments and stamping out the first sparks of passion before the fire can spread. And it so happens that among the chaste are found the finest men in every way. And among the lustful predominate the timid, the selfish, the treacherous and the cruel - characters of little manliness.'

March 22nd

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. “I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? Father, save me from this hour”? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again. The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 386: Don’t forget, my son, that for you on earth there is but one evil, which you must fear and avoid with the grace of God: sin.

March 9th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to the people in the synagogue at Nazareth: «Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon.

Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 18: You persist in being worldly, superficial, scatter-brained, because you are a coward. What is it but cowardice not to want to face yourself?

The Way, 19: Will-power. A very important quality. Don’t despise little things, for by the continual practice of denying yourself again and again in such things - which are never futile or trivial - with God’s grace you will add strength and resilience to your character. In that way you will first become master of yourself, and then a guide, a chief, a leader: to compel and to urge and to inspire others, with your word, with your example, with your knowledge and with your power.

March 10th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the Kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, long with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full. Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.

When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’ Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.

March 21st

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Some in the crowd who heard these words of Jesus said, «This is truly the Prophet.» Others said, “This is the Messiah.” But others said, “The Messiah will not come from Galilee, will he? Does not scripture say that the Messiah will be of David’s family and come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?” So a division occurred in the crowd because of him. Some of them even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

So the guards went to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why did you not bring him?” The guards answered, “Never before has anyone spoken like this one.” So the Pharisees answered them, “Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, which does not know the law, is accursed.” Nicodemus, one of their members who had come to him earlier, said to them, Does our law condemn a person before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing? They answered and said to him, “You are not from Galilee also, are you? Look and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.” Then each went to his own house.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 29: The limited, miserable happiness of the egoist - who withdraws into his ivory tower, into his shell - is not difficult to attain in this world. But the happiness of the egoist is not lasting.

For this false semblance of heaven, are you going to forsake the happiness which will have no end?

The Way, 30: You are too calculating. Don’t tell me you are young. Youth gives all it can: it gives itself without reserve.

March 20th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: After this, Jesus moved about within Galilee; but he did not wish to travel in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill him. But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but (as it were) in secret. So some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Messiah? But we know where he is from. When the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from." So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me." So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 17: Don't succumb to that disease of character whose symptoms are inconstancy in everything, thoughtlessness in action and speech scatter-brained ideas: superficiality, in short.

Mark this well: unless you react in time - not tomorrow: now! - that superficiality which each day leads you to form those empty plans (plans 'so full of emptiness') will make of your life a dead and useless puppet.

The Way, 19: Will-power. A very important quality. Don't despise little things, for by the continual practice of denying yourself again and again in such things - which are never futile or trivial - with God's grace you will add strength and resilience to your character. In that way you will first become master of yourself, and then a guide, a chief, a leader: to compel and to urge and to inspire others, with your word, with your example, with your knowledge and with your power.

March 11th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus said to his disciples: «Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

March 12th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute, and when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke and the crowds were amazed. Some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons." Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven. But he knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and house will fall against house. And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons. If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man fully armed guards his palace, his possessions are safe. But when one stronger than he attacks and overcomes him, he takes away the armor on which he relied and distributes the spoils. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

March 13th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: One of the scribes came to Jesus and asked him, «Which is the first of all the commandments?» Jesus replied, “The first is this: ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

The scribe said to him, “Well said, teacher. You are right in saying, ‘He is One and there is no other than he.’ And ‘to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself’ is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” And when Jesus saw that (he) answered with understanding, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

March 14th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity--greedy, dishonest, adulterous--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.’

But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner.’ I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

March 19th. Saint Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ. Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded and took his wife into his home.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 561: Speaking of Saint Joseph in the book of her life, Saint Teresa says: ‘Whoever fails to find a Master to teach him how to pray, should choose this glorious Saint, and he will not go astray.’

- This advice comes from an experienced soul. Follow it.

The Way, 653: What an example of discretion is given us by the Mother of God! Not even to Saint Joseph does she communicate the mystery.

Ask our Lady for the discretion you lack.

The Forge, 553: Saint Joseph, our Father and Lord: most chaste, most pure. You were found worthy to carry the Child Jesus in your arms, to wash him, to hug him. Teach us to get to know God, and to be pure, worthy of being other Christs.

March 18th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: Jesus answered the Jews: «My Father is at work until now, so I am at work.» For this reason the Jews tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God.

Jesus answered and said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also. For the Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes. Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to his Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation. I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.

March 15th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY Jesus said to Nicodemus:“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *Furrow*, 182: What compassion you feel for them!... You would like to cry out to them that they are wasting their time... Why are they so blind, and why can't they perceive what you — a miserable creature — have seen? Why don't they go for the best? —Pray and mortify yourself. Then you have the duty to wake them up, one by one, explaining to them — also one by one — that they, like you, can find a divine way, without leaving the place they occupy in society.

March 16th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: At that time Jesus left [Samaria] for Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his native place. When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast. Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine.

Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death. Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and left. While he was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live. He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe. (Now) this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 378: Don't be a pessimist. Don't you realise that all that happens or can happen is for the best?

Your optimism will be a necessary consequence of your faith.

The Way, 379: Naturalness. Let your lives as christian men, as christian women - your salt and your light - flow spontaneously, without anything odd or silly: always carry with you our spirit of simplicity.

March 17th

THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY: There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep (Gate) a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.

Now that day was a sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there.

After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a sabbath.

SAINT JOSEMARIA. *The Way*, 380: 'And in a paganised or pagan environment when my life clashes with its surroundings, won't my naturalness seem artificial?' you ask me. And I reply: Undoubtedly your life will clash with theirs; and that contrast - faith confirmed by works! - is exactly the naturalness I ask of you.