



S ✨ E P S

**FOLLOWING IN THE
FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS**

LENT 2021: PRACTICE



The theme of death pervades the Bible. In fact, the whole thing points to one death in particular - that of Jesus Christ. The beautiful thing though, is how the crucifixion transforms the whole narrative. It takes the history of a people searching to be saved and gives it to them in a way that not just delivers them, but gives them new life as well.

Jesus' death offers us life. A life we are invited to take part in and be transformed by! Taking part in this life however, also means taking part in His death. The invitation comes to us often in the Gospels. We are all too familiar with the direction to "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me." (Matt 16:24). We hear it again in the reading this week, "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." (John 12:24).

This metaphor not only applies to Jesus anticipating his own sacrifice but reminds us of ours as well. We are invited to participate in the sacrifice and the new life that is born from it. We can't really have one without the other though, and that can be a little scary. It means we will suffer in some way.

Jesus transfigures this too though! He enters into our suffering and accompanies us through it. He gives it purpose - even when we can't see it. He took on this sorrow and affliction so that we would know He is present in our own.

He loves us. Jesus does not leave us alone. Even the smallest prayer of "Jesus I need you!" shares the cross we are carrying with Him and begins to transform our suffering into new life.

“We were promised sufferings. They were part of the program. We were even told, 'Blessed are they that mourn,' and I accept it. I've got nothing that I hadn't bargained for. Of course, it is different when the thing happens to oneself, not to others, and in reality, not imagination.”

— C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*

We have some opportunities for you to bring your grief before the Lord. Though they might seem familiar, approaching them through a new lens can cause them to take on new meaning and purpose.

Adoration:

Thursdays, 7-8pm
In-person and livestream

Confessions:

Sundays, 10-10:45am
Thursdays, 7-7:45pm

Stations of the Cross:

Fridays at 6:00pm, in person and on livestream

WEEK FIVE:

Grieving



For each of the Sundays of Lent at the 9am and 6pm Masses we will be focusing on a particular theme: Heart to Heart. This week, we're "Grieving".

The theme for Heart to Heart this week is difficult to write about. The prolonged grief we have shared this past year has touched even the little things in our lives. For some, it has touched the most important things. The losses we have experienced warrant grieving. I didn't realize this until after the first wave of loss had hit last year.

I always thought that I would go through my first pregnancy surrounded by my family and experienced mom friends. I ended up spending most of it alone. The anticipated baby shower and hospital visitors were lost. Every introduction through screen doors and masks seems to take a chunk out of the hopes I had held for the birth of my first baby. The loss of autonomy in motherhood was coupled with the inability to go anywhere safely or invite help into our house. My heart felt overwhelmed before I could name why.

Then the Holy Spirit whispered, "You have lost so much, and it's ok to grieve." That was it! Finally what I was feeling had a name. A flood of peace was released into my mind and heart. Even though the losses were still there, I could begin to talk to the Lord about them and bring my brokenness to Him. In this place of prayer, Jesus brought consolation and healing to the grieving parts of me.

There has been more loss; jobs, time with family, Fr. Mike Lee and, just a week ago, my grandmother. What is different now, is that each one gets brought before the Lord with confidence that He sees my heart and wants to comfort and heal it. Now, I'm anticipating how beautiful these losses will be once He has transformed the grief into joy.

Will you bring your grief to the heart of the Lord? Will you let Him sit with you and transform the loss with His love?