

FEBRUARY 1: FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Zep 2:3; 3:12-13 | 1 Cor 1:26-31 | Mt 5:1-12a | CCC References 1-25

GOD'S LOVING PLAN FOR US

- God created us out of love
- God wants a relationship with us
- Even our sinfulness does not stop God from loving us
- So, in love, God sent His Son to reconcile us to Himself

What is the plan of God for man? God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. In the fullness of time, God the Father sent his Son as the Redeemer and Savior of mankind, fallen into sin, thus calling all into his Church and, through the work of the Holy Spirit, making them adopted children and heirs of his eternal happiness. (*Compendium #1*)

FEBRUARY 8: FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Is 58:7-10 | 1 Cor 2:1-5 | Mt 5:13-16 | CCC References 396-403, 415-417

THE FALL: THE NEED FOR REDEMPTION

- The first humans, in a desire to be “like God” chose disobedience
- Because of this choice, they and their descendant (i.e. all humanity) lost the state of original justice
- Through this “Original Sin,” humanity's relationship with its Creator was damaged and humanity developed an inclination towards sin (called concupiscence)
- Yet God still loved humanity and continues to love us

What was the first human sin? When tempted by the devil, the first man and woman allowed trust in their Creator to die in their hearts. In their disobedience they wished to become “like God” but without God and not in accordance with God (Gn 3:5). Thus, Adam and Eve immediately lost for themselves and for all their descendants the original grace of holiness and justice. (*Compendium #75*)

FEBRUARY 15: SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sir 15:15-20 | 1 Cor 2:6-10 | Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37 | CCC References 422-424

THE GOOD NEWS: GOD THE FATHER SENDS HIS SON TO SAVE US

- The “Son of God,” Jesus Christ took on our human nature in order to transform it
- He was born of the Virgin Mary during the reign of Caesar Augustus and King Herod in Judaea
- In Christ, the promises made by God in the Old Testament are fulfilled
- Jesus suffered, died, rose and ascended for our salvation

What is the Good News for humanity? It is the proclamation of Jesus Christ, the “Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16), who died and rose from the dead. In the time of King Herod and the Emperor Caesar Augustus, God fulfilled the promises that he made to Abraham and his descendants. He sent “his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Gal 4:4-5). (*Compendium #79*)

FEBRUARY 22: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7 | Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19 | Mt 4:1-11 | CCC References 464-467, 469

JESUS CHRIST: TRUE GOD AND TRUE MAN

- By taking on our humanity and dying and rising for us, Jesus shows us God's love for us
- In his words and deeds, Jesus also shows us how to be truly human
- Through Baptism we are united with Christ and made adopted children of God
- Jesus' life, death and resurrection make possible for us a new life of communion with God

In what way is Jesus Christ true God and true man? Jesus is inseparably true God and true man in the unity of his divine Person. As the Son of God, who is “begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father,” he was made true man, our brother, without ceasing to be God, our Lord. (*Compendium #87*)

MARCH 1: SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Gn 12:1-4a | 2 Tim 1:8b-10 | Mt 17:1-9 | CCC References 31-36, 46-47

HUMANS CAN KNOW GOD NATURALLY

- God created us with a natural desire to know Him, even if this desire is sometimes ignored on our part
- God also gave us the ability to know Him prior to Revelation
- Human beings can naturally know God's existence
- We can particularly know Him as the origin and end of all creation and as Truth, Beauty, and Goodness

How is it possible to know God with only the light of human reason? Starting from creation, that is from the world and from the human person, through reason alone one can know God with certainty as the origin and end of the universe, as the highest good and as infinite truth and beauty. (*Compendium #3*)

MARCH 8: THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Ex 17:3-7 | Rom 5:1-2, 5-8 | Jn 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42 | CCC References 37-38

WHY DO WE HAVE REVELATION?

- Even though we can know God's existence and his attributes of perfection naturally, God is always greater than what is accessible to human reason alone
- Furthermore, simply knowing about God is not the same as being in relationship with Him
- In order to communicate the mystery which God is in Himself, which is not accessible to human reason, God has revealed Himself to us
- This Divine Revelation also gives us surety of some things that are naturally accessible to human reason

Is the light of reason alone sufficient to know the mystery of God? In coming to a knowledge of God by the light of reason alone man experiences many difficulties. Indeed, on his own he is unable to enter into the intimacy of the divine mystery. This is why he stands in need of being enlightened by God's revelation, not only about those things that exceed his understanding, but also about those religious and moral truths which of themselves are not beyond the grasp of human reason, so that even in the present condition of the human race, they can be known by all with ease, with firm certainty and with no admixture of error. (*Compendium #4*)

MARCH 15: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a | Eph 5:8-14 | Jn 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38 | CCC References 50-53, 68-69

WHAT IS REVELATION?

- By words and deeds throughout "salvation history," God reveals Himself and His loving plan for us
- This plan is that all people might share in the divine life by "adoption" through Christ
- Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, is the fullness of Revelation

What does God reveal to man? God in his goodness and wisdom reveals himself. With deeds and words, he reveals himself and his plan of loving goodness which he decreed from all eternity in Christ. According to this plan, all people by the grace of the Holy Spirit are to share in the divine life as adopted "sons" in the only begotten Son of God. (*Compendium #6*)

MARCH 22: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Ez 37:12-14/Rom 8:8-11/Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45 | CCC References 456-460

**** Wednesday, March 25** | THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD: Is 7:10-14; 8:10 | Heb 10:4-10 | Lk 1:26-38

THE INCARNATION

- On the Feast of the Annunciation (*March 25; 9 months before Christmas*), we commemorate the Incarnation
- Incarnation, meaning “to take on flesh,” refers to the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son, taking our human nature through the Virgin Mary
- In the Incarnation, Christ takes on our entire human nature and is thus united to us “consubstantially”
- God the Son took on our human nature to reconcile us with God, show us God’s love, give us a model of holiness, and offer us participation in God’s own life of communion

Why did the Son of God become man? For us men and for our salvation, the Son of God became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. He did so to reconcile us sinners with God, to have us learn of God’s infinite love, to be our model of holiness and to make us “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pt 1:4). (*Compendium #85*)

MARCH 29: PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD’S PASSION

Mt 21:1-11 | Is 50:4-7 | Phil 2:6-11 | Mt 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54 | CCC References 571-573

THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

- The term “Paschal Mystery” is used to refer to the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ
- Through the Paschal Mystery, the saving work of the Incarnation is brought to fulfillment
- The term “Paschal” refers to Christ as the fulfillment of the Passover (see Exodus 12)
- Christ, our Passover Lamb, offers himself in sacrifice for our salvation

What is the importance of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus? The Paschal Mystery of Jesus, which comprises his passion, death, resurrection, and glorification, stands at the center of the Christian faith because God’s saving plan was accomplished once for all by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ. (*Compendium #112*)