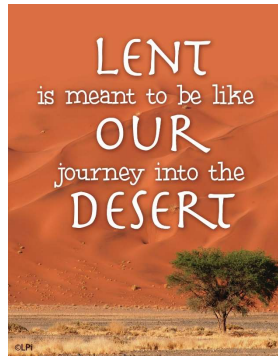
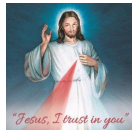


## St. Michael Church Newark, NY



### ***The Journey to Jesus***

Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunncliff  
February 26, 2018



### ***The Journey to Jesus***

Gospel Reading for 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent, Year B  
Mark 1:12-15

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."



## The Journey to Jesus



What comes to mind when you hear the word “journey”?

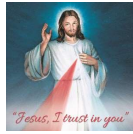


## The Journey to Jesus

In the New American Bible Revised Edition Luke 9:51-19:27 is identified as “The Journey to Jerusalem: Luke’s Travel Narrative.”

Luke 9:51-52a – “When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him.

Jesus’ life will climax in his journey to the Cross.



## The Journey to Jesus

GPS

“global positioning system”

Or

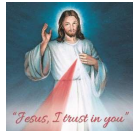
“God positioning system”



## The Journey to Jesus

“Through *Sacred Scripture*, when it is listened to and meditated upon in *silence*, divine graces are poured out on man. It is in faith, and not by traveling in distant lands or by crossing seas and continents, that we can find and contemplate God.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 23 – paragraph 4, italics my emphasis)



## The Journey to Jesus

There are steps to knowing Jesus (developing a relationship)

- John 4:4-42 – The Samaritan Woman at the Well
- John 9:1-41 – The Man Born Blind



## The Journey to Jesus



What comes to mind when you hear the word “desert”?



## The Journey to Jesus

What comes to mind when you hear the word “desert”?

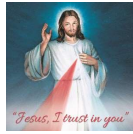
- Physically – lack of life – but there is life in the desert
- Spiritually
  - Silence/contemplation
  - Why did Jesus go into the desert?



## The Journey to Jesus

“The desert is the place of hunger, thirst, and the spiritual combat. It is vitally important to withdraw to the desert in order to combat the dictatorship of a world filled with idols that gorge themselves on technology and material goods, a world dominated and manipulated by the media, a world that flees God by taking refuge in noise.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 64 – paragraph 103)



## The Journey to Jesus



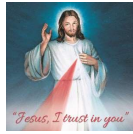
What comes to mind when you hear the word "Lent"?



## The Journey to Jesus

What comes to mind when you hear the word "Lent"?

- Ashes
- RCIA
- Stations of the Cross
- **Giving up something**
- Abstaining from meat
- Three Pillars of Lent
  - Fasting
  - Almsgiving
  - **Prayer**



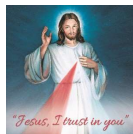
## The Journey to Jesus

A time to consider the giving up of what we are, for what we may become.



Do you “give up” something for Lent?

What and Why?



## The Journey to Jesus

What effect does Lent have on You?



Happy



Miserable



Sad



Hungry



Blessed



Other



## The Journey to Jesus

### Why Fast and & Abstain? Why give something up?

"Fasting weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. *On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God.* Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour. *It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger.*"

(Francis, "Message for Lent 2018", 3, italics my emphasis)

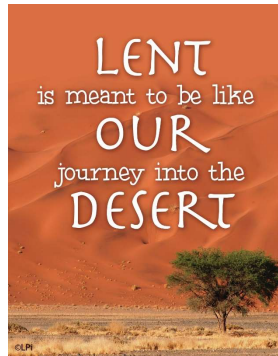


## The Journey to Jesus

### Why Fast and & Abstain? Why give something up?

- Develop Discipline
  - (example do we think about how much we eat?)
  - Fridays outside of Lent
- Make God our #1 priority
  - Matthew 6:24 - "No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."





## *The Journey to Jesus*



## *The Journey to Jesus*

If all of life is a journey,  
why even have Lent?

"Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in his providence offers us each year the season of Lent as a "sacramental sign of our conversion". *Lent, summons us, and enables us, to **come back** to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every subject of our life.*"

(Francis, "Message for Lent 2018", I, italics my emphasis)



## ***The Journey to Jesus***

### **Make Time for Jesus**

- When we know someone we care about is going to die, we spend EXTRA time with them.
- Jesus is going to die on Good Friday.

→ Will you spend some extra time with him?



## ***The Journey to Jesus***

### **Lent becomes a time of self-evaluation**

- Ten Commandments
- Seven Deadly Sins
- Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy



## The Journey to Jesus

### Why is the Desert Necessary?

Distractions, Distractions, Distractions

- Cell phone, social media, activities
  - Maybe you can't give up the phone but do you have to always answer calls or respond *immediately* to texts?
  - How long did Jesus take after receiving news that Lazarus was ill before going?
- It's okay to say no



## The Journey to Jesus

“Our world no longer hears God because it is constantly speaking, at a devastating speed and volume, in order to say nothing.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 56 – paragraph 74)



## **The Journey to Jesus**

“Silence is difficult, but it enables man to let himself be led by God. From silence is born silence. Through God the silent, we can attain silence. And man is unceasingly surprised by the light that pours forth then.

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 54, paragraph 68)



## **The Journey to Jesus**

**Contemplation is not just  
for monastic life**

From Nicolas Diat in *The Power of Silence*

“Being quiet is a condition for silence, but is not silence.  
Silence is a word, silence is a thought”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 21)

**Centering prayer**



## The Journey to Jesus

“If we do not cultivate this silence how can we find God?”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 22 – paragraph 3)

“Silence is not an absence. On the contrary, it is the manifestation of a presence, the most intense of all presences.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 27 – paragraph 12)



## The Journey to Jesus

### Martha & Mary

As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.” The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”



## The Journey to Jesus

“It is necessary to leave our interior turmoil in order to find God.” .... “Solitude is the best state in which to hear God’s silence. . If a person isolates himself by going away to a monastery, he comes first to seek silence. And yet, the goal of his search is within him.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 23 – paragraph 6)



## The Journey to Jesus

“There are souls who claim solitude so as to find themselves, and others who seek it in order to give themselves to God and to others.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 69 – paragraph 117)



## The Journey to Jesus

“Christ’s public life is rooted in and supported by the silent prayer of his hidden life.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 100 – paragraph 196)

“Christ started his public ministry by withdrawing into the desert for forty days.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 103 – paragraph 198)

“The Gospels explain how Jesus went frequently into the deserts, seeking solitude, calm, and nocturnal silence.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 103 – paragraph 199)



## The Journey to Jesus

“Thus I knew that I could acquire a spiritual vigor and freshness like those of a tree planted beside running waters, which stretches out its roots toward the stream. This tree fears nothing when hot weather arrives; its foliage stays green; during years of drought, it is carefree and does not cease to bear fruit (Jer 17:17-8).”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 76 – paragraph 134)



## The Journey to Jesus

### When we think we have to say something

“And at the most crucial moment in his life, when there was screaming on all sides, covering him with all sorts of lies and calumnies, when the high priest asked him: “Have you no answer to make?” Jesus preferred silence.”

(Sarah, *The Power of Silence*, page 80 – paragraph 141)

(Mark 15:1-5)



## The Journey to Jesus


- "Is this person weak enough to be a servant of the gospel of Christ?" (Buckley, *What Do You Seek?*, 81)
- "Is this person deficient enough not be able to ward off significant suffering from his or her life, so that the person can live with a certain amount of failure and can feel what it is to be an average person?" (Buckley, *What Do You Seek?*, 81)



**Upcoming Presentations/Discussions**

Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>  
at 7:00 p.m.

The Journey to Jesus:  
Acts of Mercy



**The Journey to Jesus**

**Resources**

Buckley, Michael J., SJ, *What Do You Seek: The Questions of Jesus as Challenge and Promise*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 2016.

Pope Francis, "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2018", available online at [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/lent/documents/papa-francesco\\_20171101\\_messaggio-quaresima2018.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/lent/documents/papa-francesco_20171101_messaggio-quaresima2018.html). November 1, 2017.

Sarah, Cardinal Robert with Nicolas Diat, *The Power of Silence: Against the Dictatorship of Noise*, translated by Michael J. Miller. San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 2017.

*St. Joseph Edition of The New American Bible Revised Edition*. New Jersey, Catholic Book Publishing Corp. 2010.