

Gift of Self

**There is
a time...
and it is
now!**

*It's the
right time to...*

**Welcome new possibilities
into our life**

1st Sunday - 22 February
I set my bow in the clouds...
a sign of the covenant
between me and the earth.
(Gn. 9:13)

**Discover God
as our partner in life**

2nd Sunday - 1 March
If God is for us, who can be
against us? (Rm. 8:31b)

**Stop thinking about faith
as a collection of rules**

3rd Sunday - 8 March
Take these things out
of here, and stop making
my Father's house
a marketplace! (Jn. 2:16)

Illuminate our lives

4th Sunday - 15 March
Whoever lives the truth,
comes to the light... (Jn. 3:21)

Think of life as a gift of self

5th Sunday - 22 March
Unless a grain of wheat
falls to the ground and dies,
it remains just a single grain.
(Jn. 12:24)

**Cast off fear and face
our problems**

Palm Sunday - 29 March
Jesus gave a loud cry and
breathed his last. The veil of
the sanctuary was torn in two.
(Mk. 15:37-38)

**Realize that the tomb
is empty: the Lord is alive
and goes before of us...**

Easter Sunday - 5 April
Who will roll back the stone
for us from the entrance
to the tomb? (Mk. 16:3)

Fr. Luca Pandolfi

Lent - 5th Sunday

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-23

When people go looking for Jesus, the first thing they encounter are concrete human beings, with all their positive and negative qualities. When someone goes looking for Jesus, he/she runs into us, but we are not enough. We must help each other, not believe that we hold the answer to the other person's questions. Like Philip and Andrew in today's Gospel (Jn. 12:20-21), mutual assistance is necessary. Finding God is a communal project: no one person possesses him or has him in his pocket. Those who are looking for Jesus need to meet brothers and sisters who are striving to love and collaborate with one another and live in a spirit of communion with them.

This effort to look for God together and live with one another as brothers and sisters; this effort to serve those who are seeking God—this is already the first step in the life cycle of a seed that dies so as to bear fruit. We must die to our craving to play a lead role in things and instead learn to live together. Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Man, told his disciples that if a seed falls to the ground but does not die, it remains alone.

We must rediscover together, every day, the beauty of being a community that is striving to help all people—all God's children—attain a free and full life, even though the price of this might be our own life. It does not mean being a flock of sheep that follows its shepherd fearfully and submissively. Instead, it means being a people who are friends of God, who walk hand-in-hand with him, who have his law inscribed on their hearts, who imitate Jesus by making a gift of themselves to others like he did. In spite of the labors and betrayals of daily life, let us once again lift our gaze and, with the help of God, start afresh each day, thinking of life as a gift of self and living it with that attitude.

Prayer

Lord, help us to not remain alone.
Inscribe your law of fraternity on our hearts.
Help us to seek and savor a life of
solidarity and communion.

The things that make us suffer
also help us grow in wisdom.
Help us remember the many times
you never failed to support and console us.

Help us understand how much we lose
by living selfishly, and how much we gain
when we are willing to renounce ourselves
for the sake of our brothers and sisters and your Gospel.