



Second Sunday of Lent

Biblical Roots of the 40 Days of Lent

The season of Lent lasts from Ash Wednesday until the evening of Holy Thursday. If Sundays are excluded from the count, the season lasts forty days. The biblical usage of “forty” typically indicates a time of testing, trial, penance, purification, and renewal. In the New Testament, Jesus was tested in the desert for forty days. This echoes a number of events in the Old Testament:

- The face of the earth was purified during the promised forty days of rain during the great flood.
- Moses spent forty years in the desert before God called him to lead the Israelites out of slavery.
- Moses fasted for forty days and nights on Mt. Sinai before receiving the tablets of the covenant.
- The Israelites spent forty years wandering in the desert before reaching the Promised Land.
- The prophet Elijah spent forty days in the desert before encountering God on Mount Horeb.
- The Ninevites had forty days before God was going to destroy the city, allowing time for repentance.

Saint of the Week

Katharine Drexel

1858–1955

Feast Day—March 3

The daughter of a wealthy Philadelphia banker, Katharine received marriage proposals but wanted to become a contemplative nun. After inheriting a fortune, she visited the Dakotas and witnessed American Indians’ poverty, subsequently pleading with Pope Leo XIII to send them more missionaries. But he and others encouraged her to found a congregation to work among people of color. In 1891, she and thirteen companions became the first Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. For more than forty years, she led the order, using her fortune to establish numerous missions and schools for Native Americans and African Americans. Following a heart attack in 1935, which limited her missionary travel, she retired to a life of prayer. Canonized in 2000, she is the patron of home missions.

Prayer in Honor of the Side Wound of Christ

Holy wound in the side of my Jesus! I adore thee. My Jesus, I compassionate thee in the cruel insults which thou didst suffer. I thank thee for the love whereby thou didst let them cleave thy breast and heart, that so the last drops of blood and water might issue forth, and my redemption overflow. I offer to the eternal Father this outrage, and the love of thy most holy humanity, that into that most loving heart, eager and ready to receive the greatest sinners, my poor soul may enter once for all, and never more depart.

