

Encountering THE SEASON

Lent for the Family

Third Sunday of Lent (C)

Exodus 3:1–8a, 13–15
1 Corinthians 10:1–6, 10–12
Luke 13:1–9

Dear Family:

This week, reflect on the theme of *noticing* as we continue our journey with Jesus and Mary. Take time to explore the reflection questions in the “Ponder and Pray” section, engage with the challenges in the “Live It” section, spend time with your family through the activity provided, and dive into *visio divina* as we explore how Mary notices and intercedes for us.

She Sees the Hearts of Her Son and Us

As we enter the third week of Lent, we find ourselves once again walking with Jesus as he teaches. In Luke 15, Jesus shares the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. Jesus emphasizes God’s desire to find those who are lost. Mary, watching Jesus teach, notices the outcasts and sinners in the crowd. She sees their pain, their shame, and their longing to be restored. Her motherly gaze is filled with compassion, noticing more than the surface—she sees the hearts of those around her.

Now imagine sitting beside Mary as she observes the crowd. She sees not just the sinners but also the Pharisees, the apostles, and the disciples. Mary’s ability to notice the interior life of each person reflects how she notices us today.

“ Bless the LORD, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless his holy name! ”

—Psalm 103:1



Witness in the Crowd by Mike Moyers

Like a mother, she sees beyond our mistakes and our fears. She notices our potential, our longing for holiness, and our desire for God’s mercy. In the same way, Jesus sees us fully, with love and compassion, always ready to welcome us back into his embrace.

This Lent, let us ask for the grace to be seen by Mary—to allow her to notice what we often hide from others and

from ourselves. Through her motherly love, she gently leads us back to her son, where we find healing and restoration. Jesus calls us to notice those who are lost, and Mary helps us see with compassionate hearts.

To read more about how Mary sees us with love and compassion, see *The Ascension Lenten Companion: Walking with Mary to Jerusalem*.

Ponder and Pray

- When you think about Mary truly seeing you, what emotions arise? Can you invite her into the parts of your life that you may struggle to reveal?
- Do you resist letting others notice your pain or vulnerability? Can you ask for the grace to be open to God's healing love?
- In reflecting on the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son, does your perspective of God change, knowing that he notices and pursues you?

Live It

This week, take time to “notice” the people in your life, particularly those who may feel lost or marginalized. Like Mary, pay attention to their needs, their hurts, or their longing for love. Through your Lenten practices, offer compassion, a listening ear, or a kind gesture. Ask Mary to help you notice the goodness in others, even when it's hidden beneath the surface.

Visio Divina

Spend time reflecting on the image of Jesus preaching to the crowds. In this scene, imagine yourself among the crowd, watching Jesus teach with authority and compassion. Feel the anticipation as he shares words of truth and love, speaking to the hearts of all who listen.

Question 1:

As you reflect on the image, what emotions arise as you see Jesus preaching to the crowds? How do you feel being part of the crowd?

Question 2:

What message do you imagine Jesus is speaking to you personally as he teaches?

Question 3:

How does this scene inspire you to listen more attentively to Jesus' words as they apply to you?

Fun for the Family

Create a family activity focused on “noticing” each other's strengths and gifts. Have all family members write down something they appreciate or notice about another member of the family. Share these observations as a way to encourage one another and grow in gratitude and love.

For free videos and downloadable resources featuring *Lenten Companion: Walking with Mary to Jerusalem* with Fr. Mark Toups, scan this code with your camera. This bulletin's reflection by Fr. Toups and “Family Fun” were adapted from *Lenten Companion*.

