



Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Lent (C)
March 23, 2025

I Am!

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

If you have ever tried to explain a profound experience of love, fear, or excitement; of music, nature, or life itself, you know that no words can adequately capture the essence of that experience. If it is thus with a human experience, what must it be like with an experience of God?

Such was the situation with Moses. He came upon a bush that was burning, yet not burning up. He probably thought that this was an unfamiliar natural phenomenon. It was only as he got closer and a voice spoke to him that he realized

it was not natural at all. It was a sacred event unfolding at a sacred place. There, God said, "I am the God of your father" (Exodus 3:6). This was an identification, but not a name. It was only later, when Moses asks for God's personal name, that God's real identity was revealed. Or was it?

Scholars agree that the name given is some form of the verb "to be," but they are not in agreement as to which form. Is it "I am who I am," "I will be who I will be," or "I cause to be what has come to be"? The name indicates that God is the power of existence, but it is not clear what this means or how it works. Some commentators maintain that God is telling Moses and us, *This is as close to my full identity as you can come. You wouldn't understand it anyway. Be satisfied knowing that "I Am."* †



The name "I AM" indicates that God is the power of existence.

A Word from Pope Francis

I like to think that a nice name for God could be "the God of another possibility."... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past but confidently bets on your future.

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Sunday Readings

Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15

God replied to Moses: I am who I am.... This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

Whoever thinks he is standing secure should take care not to fall.

Luke 13:1-9

"Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do my experiences of God in prayer prompt me to love others?
- How am I bearing good fruit?



Why Do Good People Do Bad Things?

Paige Byrne Shortal

When we do something bad the first time, we feel bad about it. But the next time, it's a little easier, and,

after that, doing something bad gets easier and easier. Feeling bad about doing bad things is a good thing. If we didn't, it would mean that our conscience is pretty sluggish, and our soul would really be in danger. One way to keep your conscience in good shape is the "examination of conscience." Every night before you go to bed, ask God to help you remember your day. Then, if you remember doing, saying, or thinking something you shouldn't have, tell God you're sorry and ask for help to do better the next day. I can't think of a better practice for busy folks who want to be good parents and for children who are being raised to be good Christians.

Why do good people do bad things? Even St. Paul wrote about this problem in his letter to the Christians in Rome: "What I do, I do not understand. For I do not do what I want,

but I do what I hate" (Romans 7:15). Sin is real. But, you know what? Forgiveness is real, too. As Catholics, we have the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, commonly known as confession. Many Catholics celebrate this sacrament regularly

and can't imagine being without it. Others are hesitant—some out of fear, some out of shame. Let me tell you: there's no reason to be afraid. If your pastor is not someone with a good "bedside manner," go to a different priest. As for shame—fuhgeddaboutit. Seriously, it's unlikely that you could tell a priest something he hasn't heard before, and we are all sinners. All! Remember

the prayer we say before we receive holy Communion? "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." None of us is worthy, but all of us are loved. †

Feeling bad about doing bad things is a good thing.

From *Live Lent at Home: Daily Prayers and Activities for Families* by Paige Byrne Shortal, Liguori Publications (818691). Available from Liguori Publications. To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Lent Day by Day: Living Our Beliefs" by John Shea

The book *The Road Less Traveled* opens with: "Life is difficult." Life's difficulties are often characterized as a storm. The question is, "Are we going to be blown around by this wind, or are we going to lean into it?" Think of a difficulty you're dealing with. Do you feel overwhelmed? Pause and reach deep inside yourself. Retrieve your resources—those inside and outside you. Integrate any sense of inadequacy into a larger sense of being able to learn and adapt. See yourself as setting forth on an adventure. Be ready.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.



Lord Jesus, that we may be faithful to your teachings, your commands, and your call, we pray— Lord, let us be like you. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 24–29

Monday, Lenten Weekday: 2 Kgs 5:1–15b / Lk 4:24–30

Tuesday, Annunciation of the Lord: Is 7:10–14; 8:10 / Heb 10:4–10 / Lk 1:26–38

Wednesday, Lenten Weekday: Dt 4:1, 5–9 / Mt 5:17–19

Thursday, Lenten Weekday: Jer 7:23–28 / Lk 11:14–23

Friday, Lenten Weekday: Hos 14:2–10 / Mk 12:28–34

Saturday, Lenten Weekday: Hos 6:1–6 / Lk 18:9–14

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