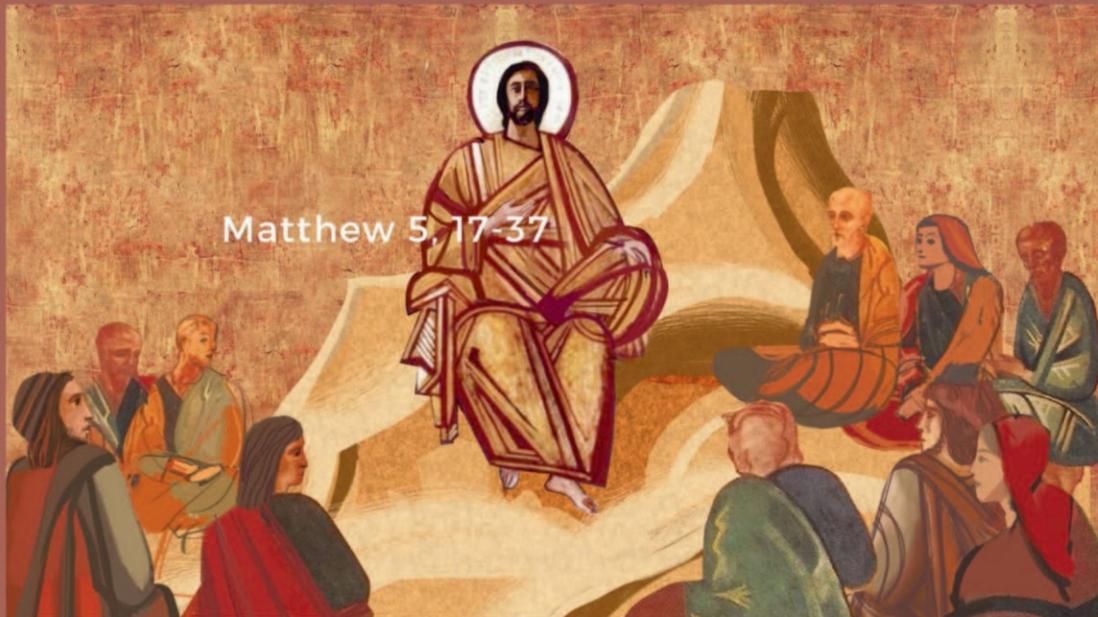


February 15, 2026
6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Welcome to Saint Nicholas and Saint William Catholic Parish

Pastor: Rev. Matthew D. Stanley | **Parochial Vicar:** Rev. Michael Gazzingan
In Residence: Rev. Warwick James | Rev. Gregory Kimm | Rev. Randy Valenton



SUNDAY MASS

St. William Church Saturday (Vigil) at 4:00pm, Sunday at 9:00am, 11:00am, & 5:00pm

St. Nicholas Church Sunday at 8:00am, 10:00am, 12:00pm & 5:00pm (French)

LIVESTREAM MASS Sunday at 11:00am - snsparish.org

DRIVE UP AND PARK COMMUNION St. William - Sunday from 12:15 to 12:30pm

CONFESSIONS

St. William Church Saturday from 2:30pm to 3:30pm

St. Nicholas Church Wednesday from 6:00pm to 6:55pm

DAILY MASS

St. Nicholas Church Monday - Saturday at 8:00am, Monday - Friday at 12:10pm, & Wednesdays 7:00pm

St. Nicholas Church is open for prayer & reflection Monday - Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

St. Nicholas Church First Saturday of the month during 8:00am Mass

PASTORAL CARE

If you are in need of Anointing of the Sick, Confession, or Holy Communion, call the Parish Office for assistance

PARISH OFFICE 473 LINCOLN AVE., LOS ALTOS, CA 94022 **PHONE (650) 948 - 2158**

St. Nicholas Church 473 Lincoln Ave St. William Church 611 S. El Monte Ave Website: snsparish.org

Jesus Descended into Hell

Reflection by Fr Michael Gazzingan

The Creed is recited every Sunday or when a Solemnity in the Church suggests. We have two Creeds, the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed, the shorter one. In our parish we recite the latter during Advent and Lent seasons. And during these seasons I encounter people hesitant to recite the Apostles' Creed, particularly the part where it says, "Jesus descended into hell..." This catchphrase in the Apostles' Creed often surprises or unsettles people because of a common misunderstanding that most Catholics get confused of. Did Jesus really descend into hell? This deserves an explanation.

It is helpful to understand this expression in biblical context. See, in the modern English word hell immediately suggests the place of eternal punishment, a place where unrepenting souls suffer forever. But in its original context, the Creed uses the term in its biblical sense—Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek—which simply meant the "abode of the dead," the place where souls awaited the Redeemer before the gates of heaven were opened. It wasn't the place of eternal damnation.

The Church makes this distinction very clearly. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that Jesus indeed went to Sheol or Hades, the abode of the dead, to free the just who had gone before him. This "hell" was the realm of the dead who were "deprived of the vision of God" but not suffering eternal punishment. The descent of Christ is thoroughly biblical: St. Peter writes that Jesus "went and preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3:19) and that "the gospel was preached even to the dead" (1 Peter 4:6), while St. Paul affirms that Christ "descended into the lower regions of the earth" (Ephesians 4:9).

The early Fathers of the Church saw this descent of Jesus among the dead as a triumphant rescue mission in which Christ broke into the realm of death to liberate the righteous who awaited Him. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem described it, Jesus went to search for Adam "as for a lost sheep," and St. Ephrem wrote that "death trembled when it saw Him." By descending among the dead, Jesus showed that His death was real, that His salvation reaches all generations, and that no corner of human existence lies beyond the reach of His mercy. The Catechism summarizes this beautifully: "Christ opens heaven's gates to the just who had gone before him" (CCC 635). Far from being a scandal, this line in the Creed proclaims the total victory of Christ, who entered even the darkness of death so that no human being would ever be beyond His saving love.

Now, the line, "the 'hell' was the realm of the dead who were "deprived of the vision of God but not suffering eternal punishment," might be misunderstood as purgatory. The "hell" mentioned in the Apostles' Creed is not the same as purgatory. The realm of the dead as mentioned earlier is somewhere where all souls, good and bad, went before Christ. The Catechism clearly teaches this distinction: "Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation, but to free the just who had gone before him."

Purgatory, however, is something entirely different. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church purgatory is a post-Resurrection. It is a state of purification for those who die in God's grace but need to be cleansed before entering heaven. While the "hell" of the Creed refers to those who lived before Christ came, purgatory applies only to those who die after Christ's saving work. The righteous in Sheol were waiting in hope for the Messiah; souls in purgatory are already saved and being purified. So, the "hell" of the Creed is not purgatory and neither the hell of the damned—it is the ancient realm of the dead into which Jesus descended triumphantly to announce salvation and lead the just into eternal life.



Happy Lunar New Year – 2026
 According to Chinese astrology, Horse is confident, agreeable, and responsible, although they also tend to dislike being reined in by others. They're fit and intelligent, adoring physical and mental exertion; they're decisive but also easily swayed and impatient.

Ash Wednesday
February 18th

Masses

St Nicholas
 8am, 12:10pm, & 7pm
 Confessions & Adoration 6pm

St William
 12:10pm, 5pm, & 7pm(French)

THE LAWS OF FAST & ABSTINENCE



Ash Wednesday and all Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence from all meat (beast or fowl). Except for a serious reason, all those fourteen years old and above are bound by this law.
 Ash Wednesday is also a day of fasting. This law binds on all people between the ages of eighteen and the beginning of their sixtieth year. On these two days, one full meatless meal may be eaten. Two other meatless meals may also be taken sufficiently to maintain strength; however, together they should not equal a full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juices, may be taken between meals.

Presidents' Day Holiday
Monday, February 16th
Parish Office Closed
Holy Mass – 8:30 am
12:10 pm Mass is cancelled



A Food For The Poor Clergy Speaker Is Visiting Your Church Today

Founded in 1982, Food For The Poor works to end the suffering of impoverished children and their families in the Caribbean and Latin America.



Please extend a warm welcome to Fr. Father Roneld Saint Louis.

Fr. Saint Louis is from **Food for the Poor** and will celebrate all 4 Masses at St. William on Feb 21 and 22.

WHAT IS LENT?

The word **Lent** comes from the Old English word *lencten* meaning springtime, the lengthening of days. Lent speaks plainly about death and loss, but it does so while already leaning toward renewal.

In the earliest centuries of the Church, Christians prepared for Easter with fasting and prayer, though the length varied from place to place. What began as a short fast before Easter gradually expanded, especially as those preparing for baptism underwent a longer period of preparation and formation. By the fourth century, a forty-day season had become common throughout the Church, modeled on Christ's time in the wilderness and oriented toward Easter.

From the beginning, the practices of Lent existed as a preparation for the Holy Triduum—when Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection are commemorated and celebrated.

40 DAYS

Lent lasts forty days. In Scripture, **forty marks a generation**—a span long enough for real change to take place. Israel wanders forty years in the desert. Moses and Elijah fast forty days. Christ himself enters the wilderness for forty days before beginning his ministry.

Forty is a time of testing and formation. Lent asks for endurance, for staying in the desert long enough for what is false to fall away and what is essential to remain.

THREE PRACTICES OF LENT

The practices of Lent are simple and demanding. **Prayer** re-orientes life toward God, not as an abstraction but as a living presence. **Fasting** confronts our appetites and exposes the ways we cling to what does not give life. **Almsgiving** breaks the illusion of self-sufficiency and binds us again to the needs of others.

These practices are not about self-improvement. They are about conversion—about learning to orient our lives towards what is truly good and worthy. They help us re-order the three dimensions of the human person that have become disordered through sin: our relationship with **God** (prayer), with **ourselves** (fasting), and with **others** (almsgiving).

ASHES, THE DESERT AND DEATH

Lent begins with **ashes**. Ashes signify the transitory nature and effervescence of our material world. Our towers, trophies and most prized possessions, even our very bodies—all will eventually come to ruin and destruction. *From dust we have come and unto dust we shall return.*

Lent begins in the **desert**—a place of death. And yet, it does not end there. Through Lent, we follow Christ on his journey that passes through the desert—through death—into resurrection and new life. The practice of penance is not driven by fear but rather by hope. Christ has conquered death, and with Christ, we too will rise. Lent teaches us to face mortality honestly while preparing ourselves for eternity.



**“SPIRITUAL RENEWAL IN THE BODY OF CHRIST -
A Lenten Retreat on Spiritual Gifts and Spiritual Freedom**

MARCH 9, 10 AND 11

MORNING SESSIONS

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, 473 Lincoln Ave, Los Altos

8AM - Mass

8:30AM - Lenten Scripture

9:00AM - Hospitality

EVENING SESSIONS

ST. WILLIAM CHURCH, 611 S. EL MONTE AVE LOS ALTOS

Monday Gifts and Charisms Night (Mar 9) - Come, all who desire to go deeper in the life of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Tuesday Family Night (Mar 10) - Come, All - A night for everyone! School, parish, First Communion, and Confirmation families and singles are invited to a special evening of faith and fellowship. Join us as Jon Martin leads a night of worship and Fr. Joe and Bob Noles share practical ways for families to build unity. Parents, come with your children and be renewed together in faith and joy! Tuesday evening's session concludes with joint prayer/worship of parents with their children.

Wednesday Healing Night (Mar 11) - Come, all who desire a stronger hope in God's healing. Wednesday session concludes with Prayer Teams.

EVENING SCHEDULE (MON, MARCH 9 AND TUES, MARCH 10):

6:00 PM Hospitality & Sacrament of Reconciliation

6:30 PM Praise and Worship - led by Jon Martin

7:00 PM Retreat Sessions "Gifts" - Monday | "Family Night" (Tues)

EVENING SCHEDULE (WED, MARCH 11):

6:00 PM Adoration & Sacrament of Reconciliation

6:30 PM Mass

7:00 PM Retreat Session "Healing Night"

Event is FREE, but please RSVP
<https://tinyurl.com/snsw-lent-2026>

Questions: Contact Lidia at: lidia.fiandeiro@dsj.org



MARCH 9, 10 AND 11

FR. JOE KIM



Pastor, St. John Vianney
Diocese of San Jose

JON MARTIN



Worship leader
and songwriter

BOB NOLES



Catholic evangelist and
Formation Associate,
Diocese of Crookston, MN

www.snswparish.org

Bridges to Community Hygiene Drive

Government assistance (SNAP, WIC) does not cover hygiene products, families often skip these purchases to make ends meet.

- We are collecting Hygiene Supplies at all Masses the first weekend of Lent (2/21 & 2/22) to support our sister parish St. Leo the Great in San Jose
- Necessities include toilet paper, laundry detergent, diapers/wipes, soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste/brushes, razors/shaving cream, etc.
- If you're not able to bring items in person, consider an online donation delivered directly to St. Leo's Marketplace:

<http://tinyurl.com/stleosmarketplace-wishlist> (delivery charges may apply for orders under \$35)
As Lent begins, please consider supporting those living from paycheck to paycheck. Thank you!



FROM GRIEF TO HEALING



ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW GRIEVING OVER THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE?

Our grief group is for those who seek consolation after the death of a loved one—be the death recent or long ago. We give voice to our unique journeys of grief and find healing and spiritual growth.

**A 6-week series on Saturday mornings 10:30am to 12:30pm
February 21 - March 28**

Where: St. Nicholas Parish hall

For more information and to sign up, please call or email:

Carin Powers (415) 990-9577 carinp23@gmail.com

Lynn Hastings (408) 470-8934 lynnhastings26@gmail.com

Fat Tuesday - February 17, 2026.

As Catholics, the one thing we do more than anything else is celebrate. We celebrate life, death, new life, and eternal life. We celebrate education, innovation, discovery, love, truth, beauty, goodness, forgiveness, reconciliation, unity, family, and new life. We are a people of celebration.

Fat Tuesday is one of the most loved celebrations of the year—for Catholics and non-Catholics alike! It's the last day before Lent begins...and the last chance to feast and celebrate before the 40-day season of fasting and reflection. Feasts and fasts. These two words play a powerful role in the life of a Catholic. We feast as a reminder of God's abundant generosity and the goodness of life. We fast to train our bodies and souls to rely more fully upon God.

Fat Tuesday is the great feast before Lenten fasts begin. Traditionally, Catholics have embraced Fat Tuesday as a way to get rid of all the fats and desserts in the house in preparation for Lent. With these tempting goodies already consumed, it's easier to more fully engage in Lent and experience spiritual growth. The deeper meaning for Fat Tuesday actually comes from its traditional name, Shrove Tuesday. The word "shrove" means to give absolution—to be forgiven! Shrove Tuesday is an invitation to reflect on your life, seek forgiveness and peace, and get ready for 40 days of spiritual renewal during Lent.



The **Rite of Election** and The Enrollment of Names closes the period of the catechuminate, the lengthy period of formation of the catechumen's mind and heart. This rite, which coincides with the opening of Lent, marks the beginning of the period of final, more intense preparation for the sacraments of initiation, during which the elect will be encouraged to follow Christ with greater generosity. In anticipation of the celebration of the Rite of Election with Bishop Cantú for our eight children, we will celebrate the Rite of Sending to Election at the 9:00 am Mass next Sunday, February 22nd.

SOUP MAKERS NEEDED!



Lenten S.O.U.P Suppers - Fridays during Lent

Are you able to bring a hot *meatless* soup for 8-10 people. If so please sign up to let us know which Friday works best for you:
<https://tinyurl.com/lent-2026-soup>

Please be sure the soup you provide does NOT contain meat or meat stock (bouillon) as we abstain from meat and meat products on the Fridays in Lent.
Vegetable stock/bouillon is OKAY.

Questions, please contact Amy Blalock-Castillo at 650-948-2158, x 2201



SOUP SUPPER & STATIONS OF THE CROSS will take place each Friday during Lent (February 20 – March 27) at St. William Church. Join us for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at **5:30 pm**, followed by the Stations of the Cross at **6:00 pm**, concluding with a vegetarian soup supper at **6:30 pm** in St. William Hall.

Practice Outreach through the Corporal Works of Mercy

Please bring the following to donate to those in need:

Feb 20: Hygiene items/kits

Feb 27: Easter and Christmas cards (Unused)

March 6: Food collection for St Vincent de Paul

March 13: Juice boxes/pouches

March 20: Socks & Sweatshirts (new)

March 27: Magazines & Paperback books

Lenten Prayer Opportunities

The gray insert in this Sunday's bulletin (also posted on our homepage) describes the many Lenten devotions and activities taking place in our parish. Please post it in your home where you can refer to it over the next 40 days.



No Baptisms during Lent

In keeping with our parish tradition, the Sacrament of Baptism is not celebrated during the 40 days of Lent. Baptismal catechesis continues for parents and godparents of children scheduled for baptism in the spring and summer. Contact the Parish Office to begin this preparation.



Vacation Bible Camp VBS

June 22 - 26 at St. Nicholas School 8:30 to 12:30 pm

Priority Registration for Parishioners & SNS campers

Opens Feb 5

Full registration for all campers opens on **March 2**

Camp Sites are Limited

Campers
incoming kinders to
5th graders \$159



Camp Counselors
incoming 7th graders to graduating
seniors & adult volunteers too



Faith Formation and Youth Ministry

*Registration is still
OPEN ONLINE*

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

3 to 5 years old

Faith Formation & Parents

1st to 5th graders

Sundays 10 to 11 am

Mar 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
in St. William Hall

Christian Sacraments of Initiation

7 to 18 years old

9 to 11 am

March 7

in Teen Center
downstairs at St. William

Edge 6th to 8th

Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00pm

February 17, 24

Intersection 9th to 12th

Sundays 6:00 to 8:30 pm

Feb 15

in Teen Center downstairs at St. William

Confirmation 7th to 12th

2nd and 4th Sundays

12:00 noon to 1:30pm,
March 3 w sponsors & 15th

Retreat March 6-8

in Teen Center downstairs at St. William



**Thank you to
our children
who serve at
mass as
readers and
gift bearers!**



**Please keep our
catechumens in
your prayers as
they prepare to
become our
elect, ready to
receive Christ!**



ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Join us for

Celtic Royale

St. Nicholas Catholic School Auction

March 7, 2026

An elegant Monte Carlo style evening of dining, dancing, and casino fun in support of St. Nicholas Catholic school.

Your generosity helps enrich the educational experience for every child at St. Nicholas.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

**TICKETS
ON SALE
NOW!**



Scan to purchase tickets

\$175 through Feb. 14 | \$200 after



ST. PATRICK'S DAY

50/50 RAFFLE
\$10 TICKETS
CASH ONLY



VOLUNTEER

CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH
4PM MASS

RSVP FOOD & FESTIVITIES FOLLOWING

Corned beef & Cabbage Dinner will be served
Dessert & Irish Soda Bread included

\$15 Bar wristbands available - Wristband includes unlimited:
Wine, Beer, Irish Whisky, & Irish Cream - 21+ only

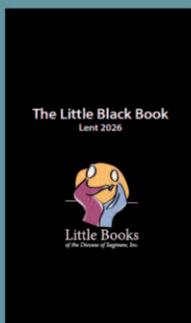
ST WILLIAM CHURCH HALL
611 S EL MONTE AVE

ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED

RSVP: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/2026-RSVP-ST-PATRICK](https://tinyurl.com/2026-rsvp-st-patrick)

VOLUNTEER: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/2026-ST-PATRICK-VOLUNTEER](https://tinyurl.com/2026-st-patrick-volunteer)

Congratulations to Duncan on being fully received into the Catholic Church and to Nelson on his Confirmation!



Lent 2026 Little Black Book

Available in the vestibule



Please pick up a CRS Rice Bowl in the back of church on Ash Wednesday. We will collect the donations at church starting on Palm Sunday or you can donate online.

This year we are helping those in Ghana, Guatemala, and Timor-Leste through the CRS Rice Bowls!

Mass Intentions

Sunday, February 15th – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 am (SN) † Doug Benbow by MDS
 9:00 am (SW) For the People of the Parish (Intention)
 10:00 am (SN) Jordan Fox (Intention) by Mom and Dad;
 † Antonio Castillo Concordia by Christina Del Rosario
 11:00 am (SW) Madison Fennell (Birthday) by Family;
 † Rosalina Galang by Lorraine Uyttingco
 12:00 pm (SN) Carma Jean Siesel (Health) by Brian Siesel
 5:00 pm (SN) † Rita and John O'Donovan by Family
 5:00 pm (SW) † Lisa Gonzales by Eileen Gann;
 † Margaret Grapp by Loving Family

Monday, February 16th

8:00 am (SN) Grant Cannatella (Birthday) by Charles Bourgeois

Tuesday, February 17th – Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

8:00 am (SN) For the Souls of the Faithful Departed
 12:10 pm (SN) Cora Arando Frattali (Intention) by Christina Del Rosario; Dick Andrews (Birthday) by Loving Family

Wednesday, February 18th – Ash Wednesday

8:00 am – Ash Wednesday Mass (SN)
 12:10 pm – Ash Wednesday Mass (SN)
 12:10 pm – Ash Wednesday Mass (SW)
 5:00 pm – Ash Wednesday Mass (SW)
 7:00 pm – Ash Wednesday Mass (SN)
 7:00 pm – Ash Wednesday Mass (French) (SW)

Thursday, February 19th – Thursday after Ash Wednesday

8:00 am (SN) Giana Zanotto (Health) by St. Francis Boys Water Polo Team
 12:10 pm (SN) † Maria H. Biskupska by Niece; † Rosario Alejandrino Manahan by Christina Del Rosario

Friday, February 20th – Friday after Ash Wednesday

8:00 am (SN) † Dorothy Hiznay by Loving Family; † Joan Masola by Loving Family
 12:10 pm (SN) Raquel Peterson (Health) by Christina Del Rosario

Saturday, February 21st – St. Peter Damian

8:00 am (SN) For the Souls of the Faithful Departed
 4:00 pm (SW) For the Souls of the Faithful Departed

Sick Relatives and Friends

Let us pray for Benjamin Backs, Sarah Bond, Steve Castain, Lida Co, Tony Croft, Douglas Eustice, James Franklin Farris, Pat Haley, Cianna Holbrook Laptalo, Cianna Holbrook, Bart Miaullis, Blanca Nieto, Susan Ocampo, Jason Orellana, Molly Oshatz, Ivana Panontin, Doug Sarver, Keilana Soliven, and Marita Trobough.
Jesus - please be a continuous source of strength & comfort for those in need.

Parishioners of Saint Nicholas and Saint William Parish are invited to share the name of a loved one (or themselves) for the prayer list. This prayer list is for those who are sick, hospitalized, or in need of healing. If you are submitting the name of someone other than yourself, we ask that you please obtain their permission.

Please email: amy.blalockcastillo@dsj.org to add a name to the list. Thank you

Presider Schedule

February 22, 2026

1st Sunday of Lent

**Saturday – (Anticipated)
 (SW) 4:00pm – Visiting Priest**

Sunday Masses
(SN) 8:00am – Fr. Gazzingan
(SW) 9:00am – Visiting Priest
(SN) 10:00am – Fr. Gazzingan
(SW) 11:00am – Visiting Priest
(SN) 12:00pm – Fr. Gazzingan
(SN) 5:00pm – Fr. Olaniyi (French)
(SW) 5:00pm – Visiting Priest

The presider schedule is subject to change without notice.

Stewardship

<i>Stewardship Report: Jan 18, 2026</i>			
	Actuals	Budget	Variance
Basket, Mailed-In & Online Giving: Jan 12-18, 2026	\$18,507.00	\$24,931.51	(\$6,424.51)
YTD (as of Jan 18, 2026)	\$860,461.90	\$853,952.05	\$6,509.85
% of budget YTD			100.8%

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Readings for the week of February 15, 2026

Sunday: Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37

Monday: Jas 1:1-11/Ps 119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76/Mk 8:11-13 T

Tuesday: Jas 1:12-18/Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19/Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday: Dt 30:15-20/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Lk 9:22-25

Friday: Is 58:1-9a/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19/Mt 9:14-15

Saturday: Is 58:9b-14/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 5:27-32



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