

Responding to
GOD'S WORD



Praying through Lent with
POPE FRANCIS

Introduction

Pope Francis reminds us that “We too are asked to listen to God who speaks to us, and to accept God’s will. Nothing is more productive and fruitful than listening to and accepting God’s Word. The Lord is always speaking to us!”

And during this Lenten season one of the best ways to listen to God speaking to us is to read a line or a passage from Scripture, spend some time reflecting on it and then speak back to God. As Pope Francis pointed out, “reading a Scripture passage, you will find Jesus, and everything takes on new meaning when you find your treasure in the Gospel. Jesus calls it the kingdom of God, that is, God who reigns in your life and mine—God who is love, peace and joy in every person and in all persons.”

So we invite you each day first to find and read the selected scripture verse in your Bible and then use the short prayers by Pope Francis in this booklet as the starting point for your prayerful dialogue with God who has spoken to you. Then in your own heartfelt words you can continue speaking to God and to your loving friend, Jesus.

—*Steve Mueller, Editor*



You Invite Me to Conversion

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:12

O God, you know me by name, you care for me and seek me out whenever I turn away from you. But because something now is not right in me, in society or in the Church I need to change, to go in a new direction. You invite me to conversion, so let me not waste this season of Lent, so favorable a time for conversion!

Called to Be a Disciple

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Mark 10:21

Jesus, you call me to follow you and to become your disciple. Help me respond to your call with a humble and sincere heart. Being a Christian does not render me flawless. We are all sinners, and I have sinned and am in need of your pardon. But I trust in your grace regardless of my sins.

Listening in Silence

Friday after Ash Wednesday

Psalm 62:1

O God, help me listen to your Word by rediscovering the value of silence in order to meditate on your Word that comes to me. In this way, it will be possible to contemplate your mercy and adopt it as my own lifestyle and attend to you whom I love and who wishes to speak to me.

Listening to Jesus' Voice

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

John 10:27

Jesus, you live and walk along the paths of ordinary life in order to draw near to everyone, beginning with the least, and to heal us of our infirmities and illnesses. I listen to your

voice to understand what my vocation is. Help me listen to and follow you, and to allow myself to be transformed interiorly by your words.

Sharing Jesus' Mission

1st Sunday of Lent

Acts 4:29

Jesus, help me to share in your mission to bring a word and gesture of consolation to the poor, to proclaim liberty to those bound by new forms of slavery in modern society, to restore sight to those who can see no more because they are caught up in themselves, to restore dignity to all those from whom it has been robbed.

Salvation Is a Gift

Monday, Week 1

Ephesians 1:13

O God, I know that no human effort, however good it may be, can enable me to merit so great a gift as salvation. By your grace, draw me to yourself and make me one with you. Jesus, show me the way, and with your Spirit help me follow you.

Jesus, Enter My Life

Tuesday, Week 1

Matthew 8:8

Jesus, I am waiting for you to embrace me, to pardon me. I am not afraid. You are waiting for me. I take heart, I have courage! I want to enter into your life and to let you enter my life, so that you may transform it, renew it and give it full and enduring joy. I know that if I take a step towards you, you are already there, waiting for me with open arms.

Living as Your Disciple

Wednesday, Week 1

Luke 4:18

Jesus, help me to reawaken my conscience and enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel, where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Help me to know whether or not I am living as your disciple and help me witness to my love for you by the love I bear for others.

Change My Heart

Thursday, Week 1

Psalm 51:10

Jesus, you invite me to change my heart, to make a radical about-face on the path of my life, to abandon compromises with evil in order to decidedly take up the path of the Gospel. Stay with me and never rush to leave me.

Transform My Life

Friday, Week 1

John 10:17

Jesus, the encounter with your Word is capable of completely transforming my life. It is impossible to hear your Word and remain unmoved, stuck in my old habits. Help me overcome the selfishness in my heart to resolutely follow you who gave your life for your friends. With your word change me, transform me, forgive me, as I open my heart and ask for forgiveness.

You Are My God

Saturday, Week 1

Isaiah 25:1

O God, you are my God! You love me and do not forget me. By your covenant bond you give me eternal life. The life that you prepare for me is not a mere embellishment of the

present one. It surpasses my imagination, for you continually amaze me with your love and with your mercy.

Give Me Your Grace

2nd Sunday of Lent

John 1:16



O God, allow me to be touched by the grace of the risen Christ and let him change me in all that is not good and can hurt me and others. Help me affirm Christ's victory in my life and broaden its beneficial action. This is the power of grace! Without grace I can do nothing.

And with grace I can become an instrument of your mercy.

Fill Me with Hope

Monday, Week 2

Romans 5:3-5

O God, knowing that Jesus still walks our streets, that he is part of the lives of his people, that he is involved with us in one vast history of salvation, fills me with a hope that liberates me from the forces pushing me to isolation and lack of concern for the lives of others and acts as a leaven wherever I happen to live and work.

Go without Fear

Tuesday, Week 2

Matthew 28:19-20

O God, help me to go out and meet others where they really are, not where I think they should be. To go out, again and again, to go out without fear, to go out without hesitation—to go out and proclaim the joy of the Gospel which is for all the people.

Walk with Me

Wednesday, Week 2

Micah 6:8

O God, our Father, walk at my side, free me from anonymity, from a life of emptiness, and bring me to the school of encounter. Open before me the path of peace, that peace which is born of accepting others, that peace which fills my heart whenever I look upon those in need as my brothers and sisters.

Reaching Out to Others

Thursday, Week 2

Ephesians 6:19

O God, help me go out and tell the good news to everyone fearlessly, without prejudice, without superiority, without condescension, to all those who have lost the joy of living. Help me go out to those who are burdened by pain and failure, who feel that their lives are empty, and proclaim the good news that error, deceitful illusions and falsehoods do not have the last word in a person's life.

Cherishing Your Love

Friday, Week 2

John 16:26-27

O God, help me to believe that you truly love me, that you are alive, that you are mysteriously capable of intervening, that you do not abandon me and that you bring good out of evil by your power and your infinite creativity.

Be with Me

Saturday, Week 2

Matthew 28:20

Jesus, walk with me, speak to me, breathe with me, work with me. You are alive with me in the midst of my daily life.

Help me to see you present so that my enthusiasm will not wane and I will be convinced, enthusiastic, certain and in love.

Living Your Word

3rd Sunday of Lent

Luke 8:8

Jesus, help me to dispose my heart to be “good soil,” by listening, receiving and living out your Word, and thus bearing fruit. Unite me to yourself through prayer, sacred Scripture, the Eucharist and the sacraments so there will grow in me the joy of cooperating with you in the service of the kingdom of mercy and truth, of justice and peace.

Surprise Me!

Monday, Week 3

Isaiah 43:19

O God, help me live out in my daily life the mercy that you constantly extend to all of us. Let me allow you to surprise me. May you never tire of throwing open the doors of your heart and repeating that you love me and want me to share your love.

Sharing Your Love

Tuesday, Week 3

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Jesus, help me recognize the gift of faith, let me give thanks to you for your love which is so great and unmerited! Let me allow your love to be poured into me so that as your disciple I can draw from this love and be nourished and fed and then pour out this love, in my home, in my family and in my society so that your mercy may be communicated to everyone.

Help Me Be Reconciled

Wednesday, Week 3

2 Corinthians 5:20

O God, I would like to be reconciled to you but I don't know how to do it and I don't feel worthy. Help me to accept, therefore, your invitation to be reconciled to you, in order to become a new creature and to radiate your mercy among my brothers and sisters, and build bridges of reconciliation, beginning in my family and in my interpersonal relationships.

More Commitment

Thursday, Week 3

Luke 6:36

O God, help me to take my Christian calling seriously and commit to live as a believer, because only then can the Gospel touch my heart and open it to receive the grace of love, to receive your great, all-welcoming mercy. Experiencing your mercy renders me a missionary of mercy, and to be a missionary allows me to grow ever more in your mercy.

Reach Out to Me

Friday, Week 3

Psalms 12:5

O God, touch my heart so I can listen to the cry of innocent people who are deprived of their property, their dignity, their feelings, and even their very lives. You never tire of reaching out to me and are always ready to listen. Help me accept your invitation to conversion and submit myself to you.

Creating Something New

Saturday, Week 3

Psalms 104:30

O God, help me realize that it is possible to create something new within myself and around me, simply because you are

faithful, always faithful, for you cannot deny yourself but continue to be rich in goodness and mercy, and are always ready to forgive and start afresh.

Living like Christ

4th Sunday of Lent

John 14:26

O Holy Spirit, teach me to see with the eyes of Christ, to live life as Christ lived, to understand life as Christ understood it. Help me to love God as his child and by his grace to live as a child of God, like Jesus. Guide me and speak to my heart so I can move forward on the path of love, mercy and forgiveness.

Reign in My Life

Monday, Week 4

Revelation 11:5



O God, help me to know the real Jesus, the living Jesus. Speak to my heart and change my life so I might be reborn and find what gives meaning, flavor and light to all things, even to toil, suffering and death. Reign in my life, you who are love, peace and joy.

Preaching by Example

Tuesday, Week 4

John 6:35

O God, train me in hearing your Word so that it is indispensable and ever more fully at the heart of every activity. May your Word, listened to and celebrated, above all in the Eucharist, nourish and inwardly strengthen me, enabling me to offer an authentic witness to the Gospel in my daily life.

Guardian of Your Word

Wednesday, Week 4

2 Timothy 1:14

O God, give me the humility of heart which recognizes that your Word is always beyond me, that I am neither its master or owner, but its guardian, herald and servant. Help me take the time to study it with the greatest care and a holy fear lest I distort it in my attempt to read it just looking for quick, easy and immediate results.

Listening More Attentively

Thursday, Week 4

Psalm 95:7-8

O God, help me practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. In listening, in communication, give me an openness of heart which allows me to enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal—the desire to respond fully to your love and to bring to fruition what you have sown in my life.

Called to Holiness

Friday, Week 4

Ephesians 1:3-4

O God, you have called me to be a saint. Help me open myself up to this grace, which works inside me and leads me to holiness, to live with love and to offer my own Christian witness in everyday affairs. Truly in my home, on the street, at work, at church, in that moment, the path to sainthood has been opened.

Sharing Your Joy

Saturday, Week 4

John 15:11

O God, help me share in your joy, to live and to offer with

joy every moment of my life by making it become a gift of love for the people around me. Then everything changes and takes on new and beautiful meaning that begins with little everyday things. Make me a better person, free from being selfish and closed within myself, and open me to others and to their needs.

Guide Me on the Path of Life

5th Sunday of Lent

Psalm 31:3-5

O God, if I feel drawn to Jesus, if his voice warms my heart, it is thanks to you who have sown within me the desire for love, for truth, for life, for beauty—and Jesus is all this in fullness! He guides me on the path of life that goes beyond the abyss of death. Help me hear his voice in a desire, in a worry, inviting me to follow him more closely.

In Jesus' Footsteps

Monday, Week 5

Luke 9:23

O God, may your loving gaze touch me so that I may return to you with all my heart, rejecting any compromise with sin. Help me to better understand that being a disciple means placing my feet in the footsteps left by the Master—the footprints of divine grace that restore life for all.

Celebrating Your Faithful Love

Tuesday, Week 5

Psalm 25:7

O God, help me to rediscover with faith the beauty and richness of the Eucharist and of the other sacraments, which render present your faithful love for me, and so in this way to fall ever more in love with the Lord Jesus and to go to meet him with joyous faith, thus becoming his witnesses in the world.

Out of My Darkness

Wednesday, Week 5

Colossians 1:13-14

Jesus, you are the master of life and want that we all may have it abundantly. You call me insistently to come out of the darkness of the prison in which I am enclosed, content with a false, selfish and mediocre life. Free me from the pride that makes me a slave to myself, to so many idols, to so many things.

Trusting in Your Word

Thursday, Week 5

Sirach 17:29

O God, help me to truly trust in your Word and, knowing I am a sinner, not to be discouraged by my failures and defeated by my mistakes because I know that since your mercy is greater than my sins, I need not be afraid.

Lifelong Conversion

Friday, Week 5

Isaiah 45:22

O God, you call me to change my life, a conversion that is not just for a moment or a time of the year, but is an undertaking that lasts my entire lifetime. Help me to abandon any behavior of sin and fix my gaze on what is essential.

Letting Go to Live Joyfully

Saturday, Week 5

Psalms 16:11

O God, help me listen to the words of Jesus, who made mercy an ideal of life and a criterion for the credibility of our faith, and to let go of anger, wrath, violence and revenge as the necessary conditions to living joyfully.

Sharing in Suffering

Passion/Palm Sunday of Lent

1 Peter 4:13

O God, help me not to seek my own interests but share the suffering and the joy of my brothers and sisters, ready to carry the weight of the poorest and the weakest and thus to become a sign to the world, the “sacrament” of your love for one another and for all!

You Always Forgive

Monday of Holy Week

2 Chronicles 30:9

O God, though I often tire and grow weary of asking for forgiveness, you never tire of forgiving. You are the loving Father who always pardons, who has a heart of mercy for us all. So let me too learn to be merciful to everyone.

Hope for Change

Tuesday of Holy Week

Matthew 5:13-16

O God, help me to bring your hope and salvation to the world, to be a sign of your love that calls everyone to friendship with you, to be the leaven that makes the dough rise, the salt that gives flavor and preserves from corruption, to be a light that enlightens our world that, though at times dark and marked by evil, can change.

Entering the Mystery of Faith

Wednesday of Holy Week

Romans 6:3-6

O God, help me to live Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday as powerful moments that allow me to enter ever further into the great mystery of our faith—the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. May this be a positive time

to rediscover my need for your tenderness and closeness and to return to you with all my heart.

Imitating Jesus' Loving Service

Holy Thursday

John 13:13-17

Jesus, your example of washing the disciples' feet means "I am at your service." Help me with all my heart to do what you have taught me to do—to be willing to serve, to help others and always do good.

Embracing Suffering

Good Friday

2 Corinthians 5:15

O God, when I am tempted to be that kind of Christian who keeps the Lord's wounds at arm's length, help me recall how Jesus wants me to touch human misery, to touch the suffering flesh of others and enter into the reality of other people's lives by listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep.

Waiting in Silence

Holy Saturday

Romans 8:24-25

O God, today you are silent, but out of love. On this day, love—your silent love—becomes the expectation of life in the resurrection. Help me await the resurrection in silence—in expectation with a love that has no doubt, but which hopes that it may be made manifest and resplendent on the day of Easter.

Welcoming Jesus into My Life

Easter Sunday

Matthew 28:5-8

O God, your love is stronger than evil and death itself and can transform our lives. Your love can do this because it is a victory over sin, evil and death, over everything that crushes life and makes it seem less human. Help me to let the risen Jesus enter my life and welcome him as a friend, with trust, knowing he is life! May he be with me and give me the peace I am looking for and the strength to live as he would have me do.

