

5th Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Ps 51:3-4,12-15
Hebrews 5:7-9
John 12:20-33

Monday March 19 Saint Joseph

2 Sam 7:4-5a,12-14a,16
Ps 89:2-3,4-5,27,29
Romans 4:13,16-18,22
Matthew 1:16,18-21,24a
or Luke 2:41-51a

Tuesday March 20

Numbers 21:4-9
Ps 102:2-3,16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday March 21

Daniel 3:14-20,91-92,95
Dn 3:52-56
John 8:31-42

Thursday March 22

Genesis 17:3-9
Ps 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday March 23

Jeremiah 20:10-13
Ps 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday March 24

Ezekiel 37:21-28
Jer 31:10-13
John 11:45-56

In our desire to trust God and follow Jesus wherever he leads us, it's not a sin to feel troubled about it.

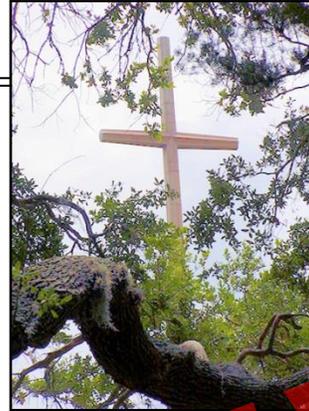
Yes, we do have to be willing to lose our lives (i.e., our own agendas, our own desires, our own ideas on what we should do with our time, etc.) so that we can unite ourselves to Christ and his mission. However, we don't have to like the loss.

The Gospel reading shows us that Jesus felt troubled by the sacrifices he would have to make. Yes, even Jesus himself felt troubled! And the Father glorified him.

Jesus came to earth to reveal God's ways and God's love and lead us to heaven. Now we, his followers, are called, commissioned, and prepared by the Sacraments to reveal God's ways and God's love to those around us, so that Jesus can lead *them* to heaven. That is the mission, the purpose of being Church, for all

of us – laity as well as clergy.

The Sacrament of Baptism initiates us into this calling. Confirmation commissions us to do it. Confession enables us to do it better. Marriage and Holy Orders give us a venue for perfecting it. The Anointing of the Sick converts our illnesses into opportunities to bear witness to Christ's Passion. And the Eucharist unites us so fully to the Passion of Christ that we become what we are called to do.



This is our everyday ministry of evangelization: We love others as Jesus loves them, we do for them what Jesus would like to do for them, and we spread the good news about this as a continuation of the ministry of Jesus.

Often, this involves making sacrifices and doing good to those who reject us and scourge us and crucify us or in any other way cause us to suffer. This is our unity with Christ, our Passion. We're not supposed to like it, but we are supposed to do it.

The Father honors us for this. Just like he glorified Jesus, he honors us with his compassion, his rewards, and his approval.

It's okay to feel troubled by the challenges we face in our mission. What keeps us going is knowing that God is raising us up. There is always resurrection after crucifixion.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What troubles are you facing? Where is Jesus in this? Is he ahead of you, leading the way? Are you following him?
2. How do you feel hearing Jesus admit, "I am troubled now"?
3. When you make sacrifices for others, how does this connect you more closely to the human heart of Jesus?
4. How does the Father honor you as you serve in Christ's mission?