

Reminders and Resources for the 2026 Lenten Homily Series

The Radical Way of Discipleship

Week One — Radical Integrity

Understanding Radical

- True discipleship is radical — it goes to the root of the Gospel.
- It requires choosing faith over popularity and truth over comfort.
- It is not easy — but it brings deep meaning, fulfillment, and joy.

Defining Integrity

- Integrity comes from the Latin *integer*, meaning *whole*.
- To live with integrity is to live an undivided life, to be honest, and to resist temptation

Living an Undivided Life

- We are the same person in private and in public, no double life.
- We resist presenting a false version of ourselves — at work, at home, online, etc.

You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. — Jesus in Matthew 23:25

Being Honest

- Telling the truth, admitting mistakes, avoiding exaggeration, refusing to gossip
- Taking responsibility instead of blaming someone else

Whoever is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones. — Jesus in Luke 16:10:

Resisting Temptation

- Choose to follow the voice of God over the voice of society
- Resist the impulses that draw us away from God

Integrity is not perfection. It is choosing truth and returning to God when we drift.
Create in me a clean heart... and renew a steadfast spirit within me. — Psalm 51:10

Integrity Matters

- Integrity sustains community.
- Without it, truth collapses and relationships fracture.
- Where integrity is absent, dysfunction grows, and systems break down.

Reflection Questions:

- Where am I tempted to project an image instead of living honestly?
- Am I truthful in small matters as well as big ones?
- Where do I most often stumble — and which voice am I listening to?

Prayer for Integrity:

God of radical integrity,
Help us to align our thoughts, actions, and choices
to your truth.
Help us be consistent in our character,
even when no one is watching.
Help us live integrated lives,
where what we say and do are united.
Meet us in our weaknesses
and draw us out in love,
to listen to your voice
above all other voices.
Amen.

Inspirational Quotations:

“They’re certainly entitled to think that, and they’re entitled to full respect for their opinions... but before I can live with other folks I’ve got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn’t abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience.”

— Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

“I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence.”

— Frederick Douglass

“I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have.”

— Attributed to Abraham Lincoln

“The truly scary thing about undiscovered lies is that they have a greater capacity to diminish us than exposed ones. They erode our strength, our self-esteem, our very foundation.”

— Cheryl Hughes

"Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it"

— Attributed to St. Augustine

"A man of integrity has his words and deeds integrated, with no sunlight in between the two."

—Charles Causey

"I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions."

— Lillian Hellman

Week Two — Radical Transformation

Defining Transformation

- When we let God transform our lives, our faith deepens and we grow in understanding.
- Encountering Christ changes us; we live differently because of that experience.
- We have to be open to being transformed, and then take steps forward toward that change.
- *Radical Transformation* means becoming who God has designed us to be.

The Transfiguration

- Jesus' Transfiguration reveals the glory that was always present in him.
- It shows not only who Jesus is, but what humanity is meant to become.
- The mountain experience prepares the disciples for the suffering of the Cross.
- Spiritual "mountain" moments bring clarity and vision.
- Real transformation happens when we return to everyday life (the valley).
- The purpose of spiritual experiences is to strengthen us for challenges, not to escape them.

Trust

- Trust is a unique blend of vulnerability and confidence. Abram trusted God and went to an unknown land.
- Transformation requires letting go of control, accepting uncertainty, and stepping forward in faith
- Trust is not certainty—it is moving forward anyway.

Listening

- God's command at the Transfiguration: "Listen to him."
- Modern life is full of noise that blocks our ability to hear God.
- Silence is necessary for spiritual transformation.

What Transformation Looks Like

- Radiant – bringing peace to others
- Free – not ruled by fear, comparison, or resentment
- Anchored – stable despite circumstances
- Unafraid – trusting God even in suffering

Jesus Models Radical Transformation

Jesus shows us what a life transformed by God looks like. He was grounded in prayer, prioritizing his relationship with God above all else. He continually sought to align his life with God's will. And all of this inner work paid off as we see how he could respond to others with emotional maturity and self control even under pressure — including practicing nonviolence amidst extreme physical suffering. Jesus cultivated an inner freedom that gave him profound clarity. His was a life transformed, full of trust that allowed God to shape him into eternal love. We are called to that same way of being.

Transformation Is a Journey

- Spiritual growth is not instant perfection.
- Even the disciples failed after the Transfiguration.
- Progress includes both successes and setbacks.

Reflection Questions:

- What “noise” in your life makes it difficult for you to listen to God?
Where in your life might God be inviting you to trust Him more right now?
- Imagine the person God is shaping you to become — what qualities do you see

Prayer for Transformation:

Loving Father,
You revealed the glory of Your Son
so that we might trust the road that leads through the Cross.

In the noise of our lives, teach us to listen.
In our fear, teach us to trust.
In our weakness, reshape our hearts.

Strip away whatever keeps us from becoming
who You created us to be.

Lead us down the mountain
ready to follow Jesus toward Jerusalem,
confident that the destiny You have prepared for us
is radiant with resurrection light.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Inspirational Passages & Quotations:

Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.
— Romans 12:2

All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord who is the Spirit.
— 2 Corinthians 3:18

What you are is God’s gift to you; what you become is your gift to God.
— Hans Urs von Balthasar

The oak tree is already present in the acorn.
— Traditional Proverb

Week Three — Radical Compassion

Defining Compassion

- Compassion is typically understood as a sympathetic concern for the suffering of others, often with a desire to alleviate it. Yet we often fail to grasp what that truly requires:
 - Compassion starts with dignity – treating every person as fully valued.
 - It means Inclusion – welcoming others, even those who are marginalized or difficult to embrace.
 - It demands empathy — understanding another’s needs, fears, or suffering and standing with them.
 - Genuine compassion results in taking action to care for another — responding with practical support and love.

The Woman of Samaria

Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well — a woman who lives on the margins racially, religiously, and socially. Samaritans were despised by Jews, and as a woman who had five husbands — likely not by her own fault — she carries both cultural rejection and personal shame. She comes to the well at noon, under the harshest sun, hoping to avoid the gaze and judgment of others... but Jesus is there. He crosses every barrier to speak with her. He names her story, not to condemn, but to free her. He sees her completely and invites her into “Spirit and truth,” offering what he calls “living water” — freedom from shame and the promise of eternal life. Fully known and still loved, she is set free. The woman who once hid in the heat of the day becomes a bold witness, proclaiming the Messiah to her people. Jesus’ compassion does not ignore sin, but neither does it trap a person in it. His compassion brings what is hidden into the light so that healing and restoration can begin.

Jesus Modeled Radical Compassion Consistently

There are numerous stories of Jesus living out radical compassion in his life. Here are just a few more examples:

- Jesus touches the untouchable leper
- He protects the woman caught in adultery
- He restores Peter after his public failure
- He even forgives the dying thief on the cross next to him and offers him paradise; imagine — in the midst of horrific torture — having the strength to consider someone else’s needs... but Jesus’ compassion knows no limits.

In every act, Jesus sees the hidden pain, names the truth lovingly, and stands with the person to point them toward a better way forward.

A 5 step challenge:

1. Notice someone’s suffering or injustice, big or small.
2. Listen to their story and treat them with dignity.
3. Empathize and understand their perspective.
4. Act to support, advocate, and stand with them.

5. Love and pray for them.

Prayer for Radical Compassion:

Lord Jesus,

We thank you for demonstrating radical compassion again and again
for seeing hidden pain, speaking truth in love,
and offering healing and freedom to all.

Help us to notice the suffering around us
and to respond with courage,
advocating for those in need of our support.

Fill our hearts with your grace
so that we may continue to care for one another faithfully.

May your living water flow through us,
turning every moment into an opportunity
to witness your love in the world.

Amen.

Inspirational Passage & Quotations:

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience

— Colossians 3:12

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.”

— Dalai Lama

“Our human compassion binds us the one to the other—not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learned how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.”

— Nelson Mandela

“Where there is no human connection, there is no compassion. Without compassion, then community, commitment, loving-kindness, human understanding, and peace all shrivel.”

— Susan Vreeland

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals.”

— Pema Chödrön

“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”

— Mother Teresa

Week Four — Radical Vision

Defining Vision

Through the lens of our faith, radical vision is seeing as God sees — seeing with eyes that recognize what is true, good, and holy in one another and the world, and then committing to living out that vision. It is a conversion experience to gain the sight of God. Once we see differently, we do differently.

Reading 1: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

In the first reading we are given an idea of how God sees — God looks beyond appearances to recognize the goodness and potential within someone. God sees the heart whereas we often judge by outward appearance, status, or strength.

Gospel: John 9:1-41

In the Gospel, we get a deeper look at the radical vision of Jesus as he encounters the blind man. The disciples are wondering what sin is to blame, the Pharisees are in a dither over their legalism. Both miss the point. Jesus sees not a problem, but a person — someone through whom God's goodness could be revealed.

Ironically, though he was blind, it was those around him who really could not see. Their assumptions, judgements, and fear made them far more handicapped than the blind man. And not only was this man's physical sight restored, but he had an awakening that allowed him a new vision spiritually — the kind of radical vision Jesus had.

The invitation to each of us is to examine our own sense of vision. Do we judge people quickly, like the disciples? Do we refuse to change our views, like the Pharisees? Or are we willing to grow in sight, like the healed man?

Jesus' Vision Was Radical

Jesus' vision was not just about individuals, it challenged the systems and structures made up of individuals. Remember how, for example, he cleansed the temple by confronting the exploitation of the religious system upon the vulnerable? Or how he warned against systems that trap people in inequality and make the pursuit of riches a barrier to God's kingdom? And how he declared freedom for the oppressed, release for captives, and justice for the marginalized as central to God's heart?

Homework

1. Check your eyesight — Does our vision align with God's?

- Are we caught up in appearances and judgements?
- Are we seeing Christ in others, including those who look and speak nothing like us?
- When in doubt, the Gospels can show us where our blind spots are

2. Get a new prescription — Correct your vision

- Start looking at the heart of others first
- See and respond to people and situations by way of love, mercy, and hope
- Notice the poor, marginalized, suffering and work to alleviate those injustices

Prayer:

Gracious God,
Open our eyes to see as you see
Cure our shortsightedness
so that we do not focus on our quick judgements
Improve our farsightedness
so that we can perceive the challenges in society with clarity
Remove what impairs our vision
so that we can look into the hearts of each other
and recognize your presence
Give us the courage to grow in spiritual sight,
to move beyond our blindness,
and allow your love to shape how we respond
May we embrace your radical vision for our world.
Amen.

Inspirational Passage & Quotations:

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world...
— Teresa of Ávila

I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.
— C.S. Lewis

I really only love God as much as I love the person I love the least.
— Dorothy Day

We draw people to Christ not by loudly discrediting what they believe... but by showing them a light that is so lovely that they want with all their hearts to know the source of it.
— Madeleine L'Engle

The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything.
— Julian of Norwich

Looking out from the heart of Love, our own hearts bleed with compassion, because from there we are seeing as God sees. From this intimate connection with God we grow to become like the One we love.
— Henri Nouwen

Whenever I meet someone in need, it's really Jesus in his most distressing disguise.
— Mother Theresa

Week Five — Radical Trust

Defining Trust

The dictionary defines trust as “firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.” Through the eyes of faith, however, trust means more: It is placing our confidence not in human understanding or worldly security, but surrendering to God’s love and wisdom. Trust becomes radical when life does not make sense. Trust is not passive. It includes our action, coupled with believing that even in uncertainty, suffering, or death, God is at work. It is like standing in the darkness of night, when cannot see the sun yet, but you know it is coming.

Gospel: John 11:1-45

In the Gospel, we hear that Jesus’ friend Lazarus falls ill. His sisters, Mary and Martha, take action and send for Jesus, trusting that he could heal him. Yet by the time he arrives, Lazarus has died. Both sisters say the same heartbreaking words: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” But then Martha says something remarkable. She says: “But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.” That is radical trust. Radical trust is not pretending everything is fine. Radical trust says: “Lord, I don’t understand this situation... but even now I trust you.” And then Jesus speaks one of the most powerful lines in the entire Gospel: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

Jesus stands before the tomb and cries out: “Lazarus, come out!” Lazarus comes out, still wrapped in burial cloths. Jesus tells the people around him: “Untie him and let him go.” That moment is a sign. Lazarus will eventually die again. This is not the final resurrection. But it points forward to something greater. It points to Easter, and the promise that death does not have the final word. Our God is not a God of tombs. Our God is a God who calls people out of tombs. Sometimes those tombs are physical. Sometimes they are spiritual. People can feel buried by fear, grief, addiction, resentment, despair. And the voice of Jesus still speaks today: “Come out.” Come out of whatever is binding you. Come out into the freedom and life God desires for you.

This Gospel reading holds the shortest verse in the Bible: “Jesus wept.” Jesus knows he is about to raise Lazarus. And yet he still weeps with Martha and Mary. Why? Because God is not distant from our suffering. God does not stand far away from our pain. He enters into it. The people watching say: “See how he loved him.” That is why we can trust God. Not because life is always easy. But because we know we are loved.

Jesus Modeled Radical Trust

There are many ways Jesus modeled radical trust throughout his life. Here are a few:

- He walked boldly in his mission to minister without fear — teaching and healing others with total reliance on God.
- He did not try to control situations or people. Instead of trying to make people believe—which would not be true faith anyway — Jesus allowed others to respond to his message freely, trusting God to work in their hearts if they chose to be open to it.

- He surrendered his future to God in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying, “Not my will, but yours be done.” Jesus trusted in God’s presence even when facing suffering.

In each situation, Jesus does what he can and then trusts God to do God’s part.

To anyone who finds themselves “living in the meantime,” Don’t give up on God, and don’t give up on yourself. Take it one day at a time. God will see you through.

Homework:

1) Identify your “meantime.” Ask yourself: What is one situation in my life right now where I am waiting and I don’t know how things will turn out?

2) Place that situation in God’s hands each day. It doesn’t have to be complicated. You might simply pray: “Lord, I place this in your hands,” or “Jesus, I trust in you.”

3) Take one faithful step. Trust does not mean doing nothing. Ask yourself: What is one thing I can do that reflects faith, hope, or love in this situation? Do what you can... and trust God with what you cannot control.

4) Look for the light. At the end of each day, ask yourself: Where did I see a little bit of God’s light today? Because often God does not show us the whole road ahead. Instead, God often gives us just enough light for the next step.

Prayer:

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think that I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore, I will trust you always,
though I may seem to be lost in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.
Amen.

— Thomas Merton