

A Lenten Letter from the Bishop

My dear children,

This Lenten season is a special time for us to grow closer to Jesus.

Most of us know about "fair-weather friends." These are people who are our friends only when things are fun, but they leave us when we are sad, sick, or lonely. They love to be around us when we have parties, games, or treats. But when we truly need them, we find out they are not the good friends we thought they were.

Sadly, we are often "fair-weather friends" to Jesus. We love Jesus and want to be near Him when He performs miracles or feeds the huge crowds of people. We like to be at Church when there are fun activities.

But when Jesus asks us to follow Him to Calvary on the Way of the Cross—which was a very hard and sad time for Him—we sometimes try to find an excuse to stay away.

We don't want our own friends to be "fair-weather friends," so we should be careful not to treat Jesus that way. Being consistent (which means staying by His side every day) shows that we genuinely care. It helps us feel proud of our friendship with Jesus.

During Lent, Jesus really wants us to be near Him. This is the hardest part of the year because we are getting ready to remember Jesus' great Sacrifice on the Cross. We can show Him we care by loving Him through our daily prayers. Taking time each day to pray shows Jesus that we are His true friends.

You have a prayer chain to help you do this:

- Read the short Bible verse.
- Say a simple prayer.

This only takes a few minutes, but it means a lot to Jesus to have friends who stay with Him even when He is suffering. Let us visit Him every day in our thoughts and prayers, no matter how busy we are.

May God bless you,
+Bishop Giles OFM

#1 Ash Wednesday

Psalm 50:12: "Create a clean heart in me, O God: and renew a right spirit within my bowels."

Pray the "Our Father" for Bishop Giles.

#2 Thursday

Joel 2:12: "Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for your parents.

#3 Friday

Isaias 58:7: "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house."

Pray the "Our Father" for the homeless.

#4 Saturday

Matthew 6:18: "That thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee."

Pray the "Glory Be" for your Godparents.

#5 Sunday

Matthew 4:4: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for your Catechism Teacher.

#6 Monday

Matthew 25:40: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me."

Pray the "Our Father" for someone who is being bullied.

#7 Tuesday

Isaias 55:7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unjust man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those that are hungry.

#8 Wednesday

Luke 11:28: "Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it."

Pray the "Our Father" for Police Officers.

#9 Thursday

Esther 14:3: "O My Lord, Who alone art Our King, help me, a desolate woman, and who have no other helper but Thee."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for someone who is lonely.

#10 Friday

Ezekiel 18:31: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit."

Pray the "Our Father" for vocations.

#11 Saturday

Deuteronomy 26:11: "And thou shalt feast in all the good things which the Lord thy God hath given thee, and thy house."

Pray the "Glory Be" for your Grandparents.

#12 Sunday

Luke 9:35: "This is my beloved Son; hear Him."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for all of the Bishops and Priests in the world.

#13 Monday

Luke 6:36: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."

Pray the "Our Father" for a friend.

#14 Tuesday

Matthew 23:12: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled: and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those in the hospital.

#15 Wednesday

Matthew 12:50: "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, that is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Pray the "Our Father" for your teachers and school leaders.

#16 Thursday

Jeremias 17:7: "Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for firemen and first responders.

#17 Friday

Genesis 37:34: "And tearing his garments, he put on sackcloth, mourning for his son a long time."

Pray the "Our Father" for anyone who has recently lost a loved one.

#18 Saturday

Luke 15:18: "I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."

Pray the "Glory Be" for your aunts and uncles.

#19 Sunday

Luke 11:4: "And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for refugees and those who have fled their homes

#20 Monday

Isaias 55:6: "Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found: call upon him, while he is near."

Pray the "Our Father" for doctors and nurses.

#21 Tuesday

4 Kings 5:10: "Go, and wash seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall recover health, and thou shalt be clean."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those who are struggling with temptations.

#22 Wednesday

Matthew 15:28: " O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt."

Pray the "Our Father" for someone who doubts or has little faith

#23 Thursday

Luke 7:16: "A great prophet is risen up among us: and, God hath visited his people."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for Our Country's Leaders.

#24 Friday

John 4:42: "This is indeed the Saviour of the world."

Pray the "Our Father" for anyone who does not know Jesus yet.

#25 Saturday

John 8:51: "Amen, amen I say to you: If any man keep my word, he shall not see death for ever."

Pray the "Glory Be" for all those who protect unborn babies.

#26 Sunday

John 9:38: "And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for a person who has hurt you.

#27 Monday

John 5:14: "Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee."

Pray the "Our Father" for people in prisons.

#28 Tuesday

John 5:45: "There is one that accuseth you, Moses, in whom you trust."

Pray the "Glory Be" for the elderly and those in nursing homes.

#29 Wednesday

John 5:24: "Amen, amen I say unto you, that he who heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting."

Pray the "Our Father" for religious brothers and sisters.

#30 Thursday

John 5:30: I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Pray the "Hail Mary" for a person you had a disagreement with.

#31 Friday

John 7:18: "He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true."

Pray the "Our Father" for Soldiers and those serving in the military.

#32 Saturday

John 7:42: "Doth not the scripture say: That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem the town where David was?"

Pray the "Glory Be" for your own Family's intentions.

#33 Passion Sunday

John 8:51: "Amen, amen I say to you: If any man keep my word, he shall not see death for ever."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for all souls in Purgatory.

#34 Monday of Passion Week

John 10:31: "The Jews then took up stones to stone him."

Pray the "Our Father" for anyone who faces persecution for their faith.

#35 Tuesday of Passion Week

John 10:39: "They sought therefore to take him; and he escaped out of their hands."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those being tempted by sin.

#36 Wednesday of Passion Week

John 10:42: "And many believed in him there."

Pray the "Our Father" for your friends who are not Catholic.

#37 Thursday of Passion Week

John 11:54: "Wherefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews; but he went into a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for those who are trying to live without God's help.

#38 Friday of Passion Week

John 12:24-25: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Pray the "Our Father" for the farmers.

#39 Saturday of Passion Week

John 12:35: "Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those who work at night.

#40 Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:9: "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for everyone gathered at Mass today.

#41 Monday in Holy Week

John 12:3: "Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus."

Pray the "Our Father" for those who help the poor.

#42 Tuesday in Holy Week

John 13:21: "When Jesus had said these things, he was troubled in spirit; and he testified, and said: Amen, amen I say to you, one of you shall betray me."

Pray the "Glory Be" for a friend that betrayed you.

#36 Wednesday of Holy Week

Matthew 26:14: "Then went one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, to the chief priests."

Pray the "Our Father" for those who struggle with greed.

#37 Maundy Thursday

John 13:14: "If then I being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for those in your parish.

#38 Good Friday

John 19:30: "It is consummated. And bowing His head, He gave up the ghost."

Pray the "Our Father" for those in pain.

#39 Holy Saturday

Romans 6:4: "We are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life."

Pray the "Glory Be" for those preparing for to receive a Sacrament.

#40 Easter Sunday

John 20:18: "Mary Magdalen cometh, and telleth the disciples: I have seen the Lord, and these things He said to me."

Pray the "Hail Mary" for Everyone in the entire world, that they may know the Risen Christ!

Cut apart the links on the black lines.

Make a "chain link" with the #1 strip of paper by gluing the ends together.

I like to use glue sticks for this. Put the #2 strip of paper through the link made with strip #1. Glue the ends of #2 to make another link.

Put #3 strip of paper through the link made with strip #2.

Glue the ends to make another link.

Continue until all the strips of paper have been made into a chain.

Cut out the Cross and staple to link #28.

Hang in your house.

Remove a link each day of Lent — beginning with link #1.

