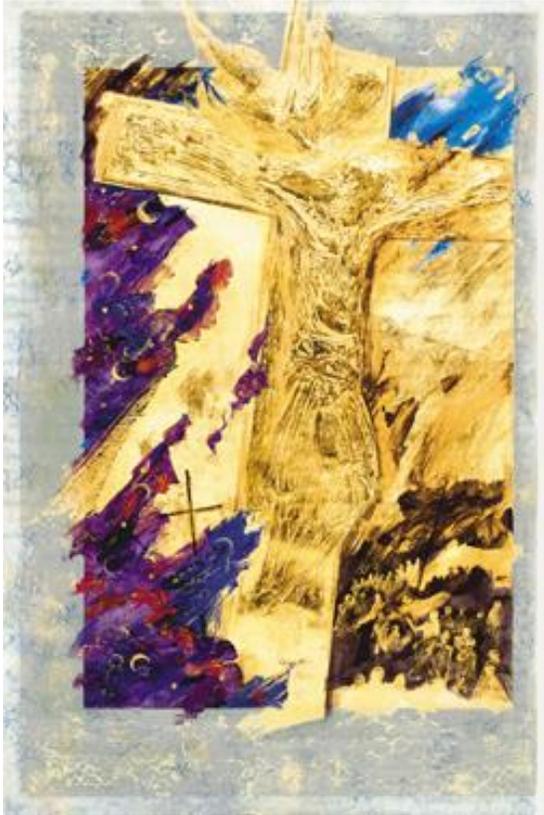


# *Lenten Reflections*

*April 10, 2019*



This year for Lent, I gave up saying “I have to” and replaced it with “I get to.” This simple change in wording opens a world of perspective shift, and an increase in gratitude for even those tasks we don’t look forward to.

How many times each day do you say, “I have to”? I have to get up by 6:45...I have to write this paper... I have to go to the gym... I have to get to the grocery store... I have to clean my apartment...

Try changing that phrasing and see what happens. I don’t have to get up at 6:45 - I get to, because I am alive to see another day. I don’t have to write this paper - I get to write this paper because I have my mental capacities and I’m lucky enough to be furthering my education. I don’t have to go to the gym - I get to go to the gym because I have my health and all of my physical abilities. I don’t have to go to the grocery store - I get to go to the grocery store because I am blessed to have money to pay for food, to have choice in what I eat, and to not go hungry. I don’t have to clean my apartment - I get to clean my apartment because I am lucky enough to have safe and comfortable shelter and a place to lay my head.

In today’s readings, Jesus says that the truth will set you free. What does it mean to be free? When you think in terms of ‘I have to’, you remain a captive – tied down by tasks to check off your to-do list. But if you can change your mindset to ‘I get to’, you experience freedom – freedom to enjoy the beauty and gift of this life God has given us. The truth is, life is a precious gift from God that we get to experience.

What do you get to do today?

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**Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent**  
**Lectionary: 253**

**Reading 1** [Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95](#)

King Nebuchadnezzar said:

"Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,  
that you will not serve my god,  
or worship the golden statue that I set up?

Be ready now to fall down and worship the statue I had made,  
whenever you hear the sound of the trumpet,  
flute, lyre, harp, psaltery, bagpipe,  
and all the other musical instruments;

otherwise, you shall be instantly cast into the white-hot furnace;  
and who is the God who can deliver you out of my hands?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar,  
"There is no need for us to defend ourselves before you  
in this matter.

If our God, whom we serve,  
can save us from the white-hot furnace  
and from your hands, O king, may he save us!  
But even if he will not, know, O king,  
that we will not serve your god  
or worship the golden statue that you set up."

King Nebuchadnezzar's face became livid with utter rage  
against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times more than usual  
and had some of the strongest men in his army  
bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego  
and cast them into the white-hot furnace.

Nebuchadnezzar rose in haste and asked his nobles,

"Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?"

"Assuredly, O king," they answered.

"But," he replied, "I see four men unfettered and unhurt,  
walking in the fire, and the fourth looks like a son of God."

Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed,

"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,  
who sent his angel to deliver the servants who trusted in him;  
they disobeyed the royal command and yielded their bodies  
rather than serve or worship any god  
except their own God."

**Responsorial Psalm** [Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56](#)

R. (52b) **Glory and praise for ever!**

"Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers,

praiseworthy and exalted above all forever;  
And blessed is your holy and glorious name,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages."

**R. Glory and praise for ever!**

"Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

**R. Glory and praise for ever!**

"Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever."

**R. Glory and praise for ever!**

"Blessed are you who look into the depths  
from your throne upon the cherubim;  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever."

**R. Glory and praise for ever!**

"Blessed are you in the firmament of heaven,  
praiseworthy and glorious forever."

**R. Glory and praise for ever!**

**Verse Before the Gospel [See Lk 8:15](#)**

Blessed are they who have kept the word with a generous heart  
and yield a harvest through perseverance.

**Gospel [Jn 8:31-42](#)**

Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him,  
"If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples,  
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."  
They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham  
and have never been enslaved to anyone.  
How can you say, 'You will become free'?"  
Jesus answered them, "Amen, amen, I say to you,  
everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.  
A slave does not remain in a household forever,  
but a son always remains.  
So if the Son frees you, then you will truly be free.  
I know that you are descendants of Abraham.  
But you are trying to kill me,  
because my word has no room among you.  
I tell you what I have seen in the Father's presence;  
then do what you have heard from the Father."

They answered and said to him, "Our father is Abraham."  
Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children,  
you would be doing the works of Abraham.  
But now you are trying to kill me,  
a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God;  
Abraham did not do this.

You are doing the works of your father!"

So they said to him, "We were not born of fornication.

We have one Father, God."

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me,  
for I came from God and am here;

I did not come on my own, but he sent me."