

CRUX

A Step by Step Guide to Embracing *CRUX: DAILY LENTEN MEDITATIONS* in your Parish or Small Group

Before Lent

- Order *Crux: Daily Lenten Meditation* for your group or parish. Here are the bulk discounts:



INDIVIDUAL COPIES	PRICE
1-9 copies	\$15. ⁹⁵ per copy
10-19 copies	\$8. ⁵⁰ per copy
BOXES OF 20	PRICE
1-4 boxes	\$5. ⁹⁵ per copy (\$119/box)
5+ boxes	\$3. ⁵⁰ per copy (\$70/box)

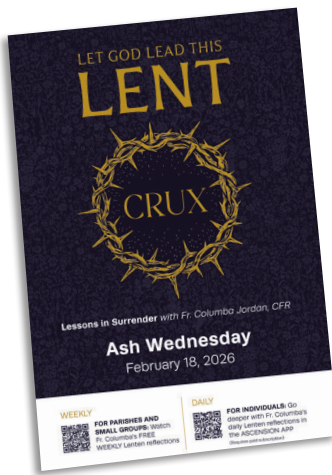
- Visit the parish resource page (ascensionpress.com/crux-parish-resources) to access Fr. Columba's free weekly videos to watch at your small group meetings or scan the QR code below. These are the Sunday videos of the Crux program. Weeks 1-5 are based on the Sunday readings. Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday are based on the *Crux* devotional's reading for that day from the Gospel of Mark. Each week builds upon the previous week's reflections in the devotional.



SCAN HERE FOR WEEKLY VIDEOS

Access Weekly Videos

- Spread the word with the following FREE resources from Ascension:
 - » Three 12” x 18” full-color posters sent to you by Ascension with your order of at least one case of twenty books. The posters will have QR codes linked to the free videos. Display these posters near the *Crux* devotionals, inviting parishioners to join the Lenten challenge
 - » Printable 8.5” x 11” full-color flyer with information and QR codes linked to the free videos as another option to invite your parishioners
 - » Sample bulletin and pulpit announcements
 - » An image and QR codes to use on your website
- Distribute the devotionals after Mass or make them available near the church entrance on a table near the *Crux* posters included in your parish order.



During Lent

- Arrange for your small groups to meet once a week during Lent. This could be on Saturday or Sunday to start the week off together in community. These meetings can be structured in seventy-five to ninety minute sessions:

Opening prayer	5 mins.
Watch the Sunday video (available for free in the Ascension web and mobile app)	10-15 mins.
Optional: Invite each member to share a high and a low for the week (especially surrounding the Lenten disciplines Fr. Columba has invited you to participate in)	10-15 mins.
Go over the weekly reflection questions as a group	45-50 mins.
Closing prayer	5 mins.

- Encourage participants with children to use the *Crux* “For the Family” section, which is available in the devotional at the beginning of each week. It features prayers, inspirational quotes, challenges, and other activities that align thematically with *Crux*’s four Lenten disciplines and daily reflections. These family sections are a helpful way for families to keep the season of Lent centered on the loving sacrifice of Jesus.

First Week of Lent

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this season of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the “For the Family” section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Lord, help guide us and reveal to us our identity that is defined by you. Reveal to us your divine nature and instill in us the trueness of your word. This Lent, help us to remain steady in ourselves and to ward off temptations, staying steadfast to your will. Amen.

After watching the free video with Fr. Columba for this week, take some time to discuss and reflect on the video.

1. What are our goals for this season of Lent?
2. How has doubt entered your life this season? What reassurance are we given from God to help us avoid doubt?
3. Have you ever felt that you need to earn your identity? Share that experience.
4. How can we reassure ourselves of our identity in Christ? What disciplines might we be able to follow to help instill in us our intrinsic identities as Sons and Daughters of God?

As we go into next week, let’s allow ourselves to examine our hearts before we do something. Thank God and do even small acts with gratitude before surrendering through our fasting, exercise, spiritual reading, and examen.

Crux is a system for doing Lent well. The devotional will prompt you to do the following at various points throughout Lent, and each person can choose if they want to follow all four daily. (Scripture will be read daily.) When meeting each week, consider briefly touching on these four disciplines and asking how participants are doing in each of them.

1. Daily physical exercise
2. A dietary fast
3. Daily reading of Scripture
4. A nightly examen

Second Week of Lent

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this season of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the “For the Family” section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Lord, help us to renew our baptismal vows with you so that we may come to better know and understand your endless love for us. Help guide us during this time of Lent so that we may remain in union with your will. Instill in us the importance of our identities as your beloved sons and daughters. We ask this through your guidance. Amen.

Watch the video, pausing at the five-minute mark to discuss the following questions:

1. The grace of heaven is given to us at Baptism. How does this help solidify your identity?
2. What has your experience been with prayer? Do you find yourself drawn to God's glory? Have you ever felt like you're "shining" with God's grace?

After discussing these questions thoroughly, encourage participants to close their eyes as they resume the video. Once the video has finished, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. When picturing the scene, what did you notice? What were you drawn to?
2. When we hear the words, "You are my beloved," how does that feel? Do you find yourself struggling to believe those words?
3. How can we strive better to accept God's words?

As we go into next week, let's allow ourselves to listen to Jesus and hear the Father's words: "You are my beloved" (see Matthew 17:5). Consider ways that you can have a fruitful prayer life during this season of Lent.

Third Week of Lent

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this season of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the "For the Family" section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Oh God, you call us even when we sin. You seek us out in our moments of rejection and feelings of destitution. Help guide us out of these times of darkness and help us to see our worth that is defined by you. Reveal to us the beauty of the sacraments and instill in us the importance of your will. We ask this in your name, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

After watching the free video with Fr. Columba for this week, take some time to discuss and reflect on the following questions.

1. Have you ever felt rejected in life? Describe this moment. Looking back, where could we see God at work in this rejection?
2. How has God pursued you in rejection?
3. Have you ever become the "pursuer" of Christ? How do you "pursue" Christ daily? What actions do you want to apply to your life so that you start to pursue Christ more?
4. Knowing that we are desired and pursued by Christ *every moment*, how does that further instill in us our identity?

Encourage participants to go to confession this week a way to better pursue Christ. May our prayers this week reflect on the surrender of the Woman at the Well.

Fourth Week of Lent

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this season of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the “For the Family” section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Lord, you revealed to St. Celedonius your true identity so that he could spread the good news of Christ. Help guide us to step out of the darkness to follow you. Reveal to us your true identity so that we may be more like St. Celedonius, who saw you through his blindness. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

After watching the free video with Fr. Columba for this week, take some time to discuss and reflect on the following questions.

1. Why do you think the blind man “sees more truly” who Jesus is?
2. Why do you think the Pharisees have a hard time determining who Jesus is? The blind man is able to *see* that Jesus is the Savior, but the Pharisees struggle with seeing this. Do you find yourself relating more to the Pharisees or the blind man in your prayer life?
3. If someone were to describe you, how would they? What would they say about you? What gifts would they think you have?
4. How do these things relate to your true identity in God? Are they in alignment or not?
5. How might God be calling us to use our gifts? How would these gifts help us *see* God more clearly like the blind man?

As we enter into next week, encourage participants to pray through the gifts that they receive from the Lord.

Fifth Week of Lent

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this season of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the “For the Family” section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Lord, we are called into unity with you. You revealed to us the importance of friendship through Mary and Martha. Help us to be more like Martha and trust in Christ’s ability to save. Allow us to continue this journey through Lent with a heart full of trust in your will, Lord. Help us define ourselves in you. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

After watching the free video with Fr. Columba for this week, take some time to discuss and reflect on the following questions.

1. What do you think a friendship with God looks like? What aspects can we draw from Lazarus’, Martha’s, and Mary’s relationships with Christ?

2. Jesus was deeply moved when Mary came to him crying over the loss of her brother, revealing to us the deep love that Christ has for *our* hearts. How has Christ received your heart in difficult times?
3. Why do you think God is so moved by our emotions?
4. During Lent, we're often tempted to stray away from our commitments to God. How do you find God inviting us into deeper communion with him?

As we begin this fifth week of Lent, let us remember Christ's love for our hearts. Even though it may be challenging to continue taking up these small acts of surrender through workouts, fasting, spiritual readings, and exams, allow yourself to enter into a deeper relationship with Christ and bring these struggles to him in prayer.

Holy Week

Begin your weekly meeting in prayer. This could either be a prayer of your own that is centered around surrender during this Holy Week of Lent, or you can use the weekly prayer from the "For the Family" section of your Lenten devotional (repeated below).

Lord, as we enter into Holy Week, prepare our hearts to meet you in your suffering. Allow us to partake in your Passion and reveal to us your merciful heart. Help guide us in these final days of Lent so that we may not be tempted into neglecting our relationship with you. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

After watching the free video with Fr. Columba for this week, take some time to discuss and reflect on the following questions.

1. Christ was welcomed into Jerusalem, but only a few days later, he was condemned to death. Why did Christ "downplay" his coming into Jerusalem?
2. How do you feel humbled by Palm Sunday? As we enter into Holy Week, how should we remain humble?
3. Has there ever been a time in your life when you have desired to be praised because of pride? In those moments, did we turn away from God?
4. How can we continue to rejoice in God while recognizing our gifts?

As we enter into Holy Week, encourage participants to pray for humility so that we may walk humbly alongside Christ as he enters Jerusalem.

More questions? Please contact us, we'd love to hear from you!

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