

Dear Padre,

My wife and I are in our mid-fifties; we have a comfortable life, go to church regularly, pray, and generally consider ourselves good Christians. So what's wrong? We feel empty, hollow, and strangely unfulfilled. What can we do?

Barring any other unnamed problem, you and your wife seem to be at a spiritual crossroads. You've come to the disturbing but provocative realization that St. Augustine voiced, saying, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in thee, O Lord." Feelings of emptiness are a gift, a message that God is calling you to something more. It's time for careful discernment.

At stake here is: What is life really about? Up to this point, like many people, it sounds like you have enjoyed a comfortable and productive life filled with many of the good things the world has to offer. But when these prove unable to give lasting happiness, you are finding that true meaning must be sought elsewhere: in a more profound relationship with God. It is no longer a matter of knowing about God but of connecting with God in a close, personal, intimate relationship.

Lent begins in less than two weeks. Perhaps you and your wife can decide how to spend this Lent seeking a deeper relationship with God and God's people. You could join a prayer group or work at a soup kitchen. You could learn about meditation practices or help your parish in projects for the poor. You could spend one hour a week before the Blessed Sacrament. Whatever you decide, welcome this new stage in life to which God is calling you. ●

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org



LIGHTFIELD STUDIOS / SHUTTERSTOCK

MONDAY

February 13
Weekday
Gn 4:1–15, 25
Mk 8:11–13

TUESDAY

February 14
St. Cyril, Monk and
St. Methodius,
Bishop
Gn 6:5–8; 7:1–5, 10
Mk 8:14–21

WEDNESDAY

February 15
Weekday
Gn 8:6–13, 20–22
Mk 8:22–26

THURSDAY

February 16
Weekday
Gn 9:1–13
Mk 8:27–33

FRIDAY

February 17
Weekday
Gn 11:1–9
Mk 8:34–9:1

SATURDAY

February 18
Weekday
Heb 11:1–7
Mk 9:2–13

SUNDAY

February 19
Seventh Sunday in
Ordinary Time
Lv 19:1–2, 17–18
1 Cor 3:16–23
Mt 5:38–48



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A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Time dedicated to being with God revives faith, which helps us in the practicalities of living, and faith, in turn, nurtures prayer, without interruption. In this circularity between faith, life, and prayer, one keeps alight that flame of Christian love that God expects of us.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, SAN DAMASO COURTYARD,
JUNE 9, 2021

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