

Dear Padre,

Can people convert to Catholicism only during Lent and Easter?

People can convert to Catholicism at any time, but Lent and Easter are especially associated with the journey of believers into our communion.

If a person is in danger of imminent death, reception into the Church can happen in a matter of moments at any time during the year. However, most



people who want to join the Church needn't rush. The Church can gradually tutor them in the life and faith of the community over the course of a year or more. Adult converts normally do this through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), which helps move people from a stage of curiosity and inquiry into fully conscious and active participation in the

faith and life of the Church. It does this while attending to the rhythm of the Church's liturgical year.

Lent plays a key role in the RCIA as a season of intense spiritual preparation for those who will be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil. The Easter season is the traditional time for new converts to engage in the period of mystagogy—when they explore with the faith community the significance of the mysteries they're now living in their baptism, confirmation, and celebration of the Eucharist.

Fr. Matthew Allman, CSsR / Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



A WORD FROM Pope Francis

Fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as preached by Jesus, enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (fasting), concern and loving care for the poor (almsgiving), and childlike dialogue with the Father (prayer) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope, and effective charity.

LENTEN MESSAGE FOR 2021, NOVEMBER 11, 2020



Our Parish Community

March 20, 2022

Third Sunday of Lent (C)

Ex 3:1–8a, 13–15

1 Cor 10:1–6, 10–12

Lk 13:1–9

I Am!

If you have ever tried to explain a profound experience of love, fear, or excitement; of music, nature, or life itself, you know that no words can adequately capture the essence of that experience. If it is thus with a human experience, what must it be like with an experience of God?

Such was the situation with Moses. He came upon a bush that was burning, yet not burning up. He probably thought that this was an unfamiliar natural phenomenon. It was only as he got closer, and a voice spoke to him that he realized it was not natural at all. It was a sacred event unfolding at a sacred place. There God said: "I am the God of your father" (Exodus 3:6). This was an identification, but not a name. It was only later when Moses asks for God's personal name that God's real identity was revealed. Or was it?

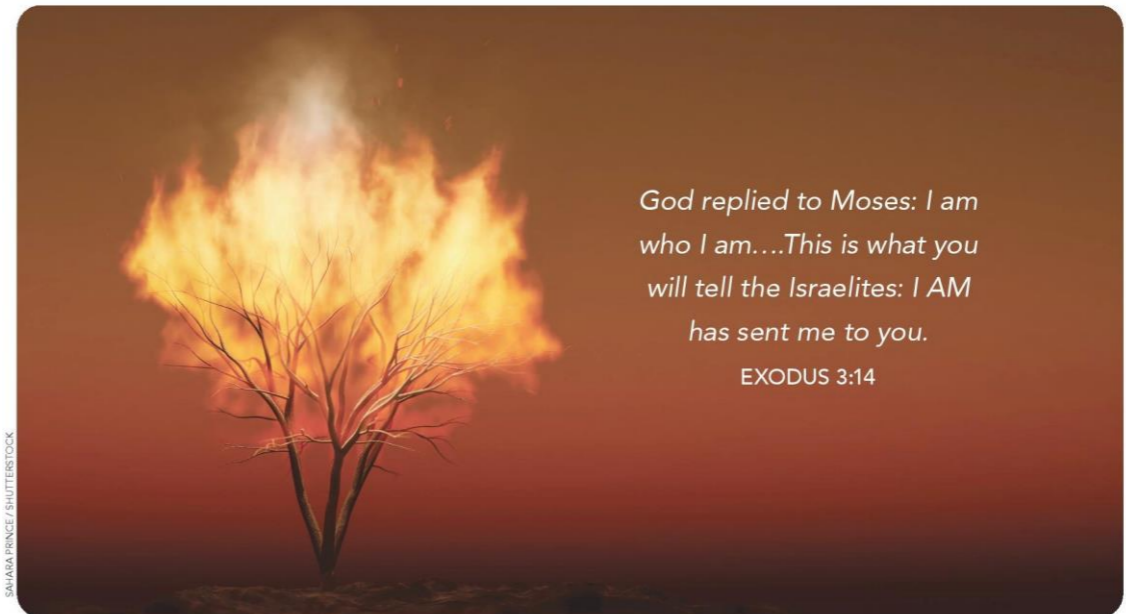
Scholars agree that the name given is some form

of the verb "to be," but they are not in agreement as to which form. Is it "I am who I am," "I will be who I will be," or "I cause to be what has come to be"? The name indicates that God is the power of existence, but it is not clear what this means or how it works. Some commentators maintain that God is telling Moses and us: *This is as close to my full identity as you can come. You wouldn't understand it anyway. Be satisfied knowing that "I Am."*

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ Reflect on this idea: profound human experiences open our minds and hearts to the experience of God.
- ★ Remember, this mysterious incomprehensible God cares for each of us.



God replied to Moses: I am who I am....This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.

EXODUS 3:14