

Chaplains' Newsletter

Volume 6, Lent/Easter 2010

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THE SPRINGTIME OF LENT...

The text from *Matthew 6* calling the community to pray, fast and give alms is proclaimed on Ash Wednesday throughout the Catholic Church. As often as I hear it, it stings.

I am often too independent, too comfortable and far too complacent with what I have while others only know want. Lent, from the Old English meaning "spring," is an opportunity for me to look within at to allow a spiritual rebirth to mirror the rebirth that I see taking place around me.

In the early church, I know, these forty days prior to the celebrations of the Triduum were an opportunity for The Elect (those who had declared their intention to be baptized) to engage in a period of intense preparation. As infant baptism became the norm, the focus of Lent shifted with the time becoming one of communal preparation as the Christians prepared to renew their baptismal promises and to reiterate their identity as God's beloved. I am not certain that my life always is a visible sign to the community that I am the beloved and that I believe that you are also holy in God's eyes.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are not something which Christians should hold dear for forty days at the end of the winter. Rather, these acts, these dispositions should mark who I am before God and who I should be for my neighbour each and every day of my life. Lent should challenge me to look at our lives and to address those areas where I have turned away from the gospel to follow my own paths and to build my own kingdom. I ask myself:

Do I pray in such a way that I acknowledge God as the Source and Sustainer of all and that I am entirely dependent upon this grace?

Do I fast in such a way that I stir up within myself a longing for the nourishment that comes from God alone?

Do I give alms in such a way that I demonstrate that my attachment does not lie in material things but that my true joy comes in providing for the needs of others?

If I look at the life of Jesus, it was marked with constant communication with his Father, by periods of intense fasting and a constant giving of self. As someone who wants to be known as the follower of the Carpenter from Nazareth, maybe these are questions that you ask yourself as well.

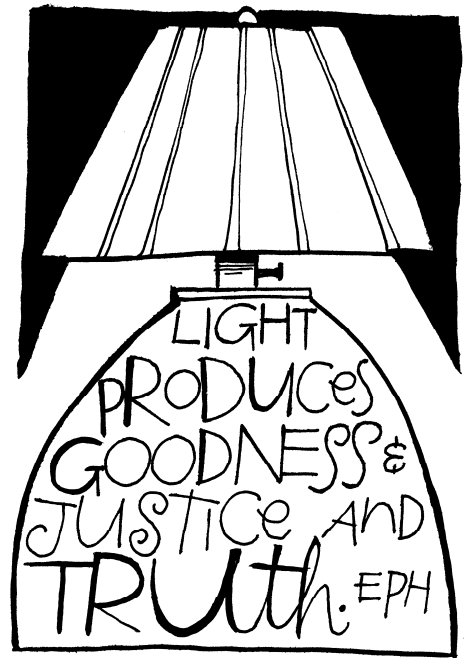
As always, we welcome any comments or suggestions that you may have which will help this newsletter to be a more helpful resource for you and your community.

Michael Béchard (Rev.)
Chaplain - King's University College
Pastor – Christ the King University Parish

SOCIAL PROJECTS...

The national Canadian Catholic organization, Development and Peace, provides many opportunities for people to actively engage in building the Kingdom of God. This year Development and Peace has focused on agrofuels as it relates to food sovereignty. Their website, <http://www.devp.org>, provides much information on the topic including lifestyle awareness calendars available for download as a part of their Share lent campaign. Students could use these calendars as a resource and create a one week plan for ways they can decrease the consumption of natural resources and thereby help them see how they can work towards protecting food sovereignty in the developing countries.

Development and Peace also has their *THINK-FAST* program readily available for download at their website. This package contains an outline for a 25-hour fast, again focusing on food sovereignty, which provides a wonderful opportunity for students to raise money to assist people in the developing countries. If your school is not sponsoring a *THINK-FAST*, encourage students to participate in or volunteer to assist local Churches that may be sponsoring it. An exciting addition to the program this year is *THINK-FAST FUNDRAISING LIVE* at <http://youth.devp.org/2010/02/thinkfast-fundraising-live/>. This allows students to create their own personalized fundraising page including photos and videos. Family and friends can now contribute on-line or in person.



While the Lenten season readily lends itself to a focus on service projects and sacrificing ourselves for others, it is important to continue this momentum after Easter, as we continue to work with God to build the Kingdom of God on earth. A class or chaplaincy team could develop a list of social service activities specific to the local community. Some ideas may include assisting at a food bank, or volunteering at a soup kitchen, working with habitat for humanity, volunteering at a nursing home, or tutoring. These activities could be done as a group or teens and their families could be invited to volunteer together.

In keeping with the food sovereignty topic and the sense of new life that is apparent with Easter, a school could coordinate a "plant a garden" project. Seeds could be planted in small biodegradable containers and then purchased for \$1. Proceeds could be donated to an organization of your choice. Significance could be given to the plants, for instance thyme could represent courage, parsley rejoicing, mint virtue and wisdom, lavender for a charm against evil, forget-me-not's for faithfulness, etc. A bible verse relating to care for the earth and/or one another can be written on each of the pots.

To further explore the relationship between faith and social justice and our global connection an excellent resource for older teens is the Walking on Water program also created by Development and Peace. This resource is readily available for download at <http://youth.devp.org/thinkfast/social-justice-activities/faith-justice-groups/>

This program can be used by older youth as a self directed means of coming to terms with our response to confronting violence, hunger, exclusion and exploitation in our world. It provides the opportunity for connection to our sisters and brothers in the Global South, helps the group to develop personal and community responses to injustice in the world and provides resources to further explore topics of interest.

FORTY QUESTIONS FOR LENT...

Lent is a time of preparation and of conversion - when we prepare our hearts and our minds to walk with Jesus to the cross at Calvary so that we can also be raised with him from the Tomb. This Lent, we invite you to take some time everyday to sit quietly and reflect honestly on the questions below. These questions are meant to provide you with insights into your own faith journey and can easily be adapted to the needs of your students.

1. Will you believe that I love you without any reservations?
2. Will you trust me?
3. Will you let me be your strength?
4. Will you let go of your own strong control?
5. Will you believe in your own gifts and talents?
6. Will you walk with insecurity for a while?
7. Will you believe that I am inviting you to greater wholeness?
8. Will you allow my kindness to transform you?
9. Will you open your heart?
10. Will you come to me in prayer so I can help you?
11. Will you be vulnerable with me?
12. Will you consider the love I have for you?
13. Will you place your hand in mine?
14. Will you give me your life?
15. Will you take me to the places in your heart where you hide out?
16. Will you drink of the living waters I bring to you?
17. Will you tell me your troubles?
18. Will you take refuge in me?
19. Will you talk with me about what is really difficult for you?
20. Will you thank me for always being there for you?
21. Will you recognize your own weak areas?
22. Will you take shelter in my presence?
23. Will you wait patiently for me?
24. Will you say yes to the growth I offer you?
25. Will you be there for someone to lean on today?
26. Will you allow me to walk with you?
27. Will your spirit open up to my consolations?
28. Will you rest your weariness on me?
29. Will you give me your ache so that I can heal you?
30. Will you bring me your anxieties and concerns?
31. Will you accept my compassion?
32. Will you share the strength I've given you with someone else?
33. Will you receive my love?
34. Will you taste the nourishment I have for you?
35. Will you be quiet enough to hear me?
36. Will you trust me to raise up the good things in you that have died?
37. Will you accept my mercy?
38. Will you listen closely as the story of my suffering is proclaimed?
39. Will you stand close to Calvary and learn from me?
40. Will you believe in the power of my resurrection?

“Will you be quiet enough to hear me?”



SAINTS FOR MARCH

During Lent, memorials of saints are celebrated only as optional memorials. Optional memorials are omitted or celebrated in this way: a third reading honouring the Saint can be added to The Office of Readings, the antiphon and prayer of the Saint may be added after the prayer of the day in morning and evening prayer; and the collect of the Saint can be used at Mass.

March 4 - St. Casimir was a Polish-Lithuanian Prince. When he was 13 years old, he was offered the throne of Hungary by factions dissatisfied with the current king; Casimir accepted the offer, eager to defend the cross against the Turks. He was, however, unsuccessful in his attempt to take the throne and returned to Poland. When his brother ascended to the Polish throne, Casimir became heir apparent and ruled in his brother's stead when he was required in his other kingdom. Casimir lived and ruled the people with dignity, and is said to have possessed great charm and a strong, moral character.

St. Casimir, we turn to you and ask that you awaken in us a deep love and respect for Jesus Christ, present in the Holy Eucharist. Give us compassion for those who suffer and make our hearts peaceful that we might never cause suffering to another. Pray for us, St. Casimir, that we may live well here on earth and one day live gloriously in the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

March 17 - St. Patrick (387-493) is probably one of the most popular saints and is celebrated as the Patron Saint of Ireland. Although the true details of his life are debated by scholars, it is generally accepted that he was born in Roman Britain and kidnapped by slavers when he was 16. He was then brought to Ireland as a slave, where he remained captive for six years. After receiving a 'message' telling him to return home, Patrick escaped his captors and sailed back to Britain, but after a few years felt called to return to Ireland as a missionary. Upon returning to Ireland, he baptized thousands and is today credited with the Christian conversion of Ireland.

God our Father, you sent Saint Patrick to preach your glory to the people of Ireland. By the help of his prayers, may all Christians proclaim your love to all men. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

March 25 - The Annunciation of the Lord is the celebration of the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she had been chosen to bear the Son of God. When Gabriel first comes to Mary, she responds quite naturally with shock and disbelief, because, as she tells the angel, she does not see how this could be possible since she has never been with a man and is a virgin. Despite her initial response, Mary accepts the word of Gabriel as the will of God and consents to be his instrument. Mary's willingly accepts God's plan of salvation and her role in it, whatever that may be. The Annunciation was originally a feast dedicated to Jesus and was celebrated by the Christian community as early as the fifth century. The Feast is now celebrated as a Marian feast, recognizing Mary's pivotal role in the fulfillment of God's plan for humanity and the salvation of the world. It is Mary, who by becoming *Theotokis* (mother of God), also becomes mother to each of us—she is links heaven and earth through her intercessions on our behalf. Having been chosen to receive God's infinite love into her lowliness, Mary exemplifies the true potential of human existence; we all have in us, the potential to be instruments of God's will and to have the courage and faith to proclaim, "let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus Christ. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 St. Felix II	2 Blessed Charles the Good	3 Blessed Katharine Drexel	4 St. Casimir	5 World Day of Prayer	6 St. Colette
7 Third Sunday in Lent	8 St. John of God	9 St. Frances of Rome	10 St. Simplicius	11 St. Eulogius of Spain	12 St. Seraphina	13 St. Euphrasia
14 Fourth Sunday in Lent	15 St. Zachary	16 Blessed Torello	17 St. Patrick	18 St. Cyril of Jerusalem	19 Saint Joseph, husband of Virgin Mary	20 St. Cuthbert
21 Fifth Sunday in Lent	22 St. Deogratias	23 St. Turibius de Mongrovejo	24 Blessed Didacus	25 Annunciation of the Lord	26 St. Ludger	27 St. John of Egypt
28 Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion	29 Monday of Holy Week	30 Tuesday of Holy Week	31 Wednesday of Holy Week			

SAINTS FOR APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Holy Thursday	2 Good Friday	3 Holy Saturday
4 Resurrection of the Lord	5 Easter Octave	6 Easter Octave	7 Easter Octave	8 Easter Octave	9 Easter Octave	10 Easter Octave
11 Divine Mercy Sunday	12 St. Joseph Moscato	13 St. Martin I	14 Blessed Lidwina	15 Blessed Damien of Molokai	16 St. Benedict Joseph Labre	17 Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha
18 Third Sunday of Easter	19 Blessed James Duckett	20 St. Agnes of Montepul- ciano	21 St. Anselm	22 St. Stoer and St. Caius	23 St. George	24 St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen
25 World Day of Prayer for Vocations	26 Our Lady of Good Counsel	27 St. Zita	28 St. Peter Chanel	29 St. Catherine of Siena	30 St. Pius V	

April 13 - Pope St. Martin I (+656) was known for his virtue and learning. He was the supreme defender of the doctrine that Christ is both fully divine and human. The Emperor of the time, Constans II arranged to have Martin I assassinated because he did not agree that Christ had two natures and because the Pope refused to capitulate to what he knew to be untrue. Martin was carried to Constantinople to begin a tedious martyrdom. He was given over to the scoffing of the rabble as he lay ill on the ship. For three months he languished in prison. Called before a tribunal, he was condemned, robbed of his priestly garments and put into chains. Finally he was banished to Kherson in the Crimea and died there due to inhuman conditions. Two letters written before his death give evidence of how he suffered.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory (2 Timothy 2.8-10)

April 17 - Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680), also known as the Flower of the Algonquins and the Lily of the Mohawks, was a daughter of a Mohawk chief and a Catholic Algonquin woman, born in present day New York. She was left orphaned and scarred by a small pox outbreak when she was four. She was taken in by her uncle, chief of the Turtle Clan, who took the Rosary her mother had given her away in the hopes of discouraging her Christian aspirations. At the age of 20, Kateri was baptized on Easter Sunday, 1676 by a Jesuit priest at Trois-Rivières, taking the name “Catherine.” She prayed unceasingly for the conversion of her fellow tribesmen and women, though they chastised, ridiculed and even persecuted her. She took a vow of chastity and dedicated herself to prayer. She died at 24, with the words “Jesus, I love you.”

O God who, among the many marvels of Your Grace in the New World, did cause to blossom on the banks of the Mohawk and of the St. Lawrence, the pure and tender Lily, Kateri Tekakwitha, grant we beseech You, the favour we beg through her intercession; that this Young Lover of Jesus and of His Cross may soon be counted among her Saints by Holy Mother Church, and that our hearts may be enkindled with a stronger desire to imitate her innocence and faith. Amen.

April 26 - Our Lady of Good Counsel is a feast that commemorates the experience of a group of pilgrims in the little town of Genazzo, not far from Rome. In 1467, these pilgrims assembled in celebration of the Feast of St. Mark and were startled by exquisite music. A cloud is then said to have descended and come to land on the unfinished wall of the parish church. The cloud then dissipated and left in its place a beautiful fresco of the Blessed Mother and the Christ Child. It was believed that the fresco had been miraculously transported from a church in Albania, although the artist is unknown. Many miracles have been said to have occurred in the presence of the fresco and as such, it has become a popular place of pilgrimage.

God of wisdom and love, you have sent your Son Jesus to be the light of the world, and continue to send your Holy Spirit among us to guide us into the way of truth. Open our hearts to your word and let us ponder your actions among us. Give us your Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of understanding and counsel. With Mary, may we rejoice in your gifts, and walk in the way of truth and love. With all your people on earth and in eternity, we ask this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of your loving Spirit, one holy God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER...

Go for a walk. Pause to look at the many green things that are a part of the spring earth. If you can find flowers or buds on trees, take time to touch them. Let them speak to you about hope, newness of life.

Look at the inner garden of your life. Where do the waters of life flow freely? Where do you see signs of growth, birth, hope, growth, change? How is God coaxing life out of you? What is being raised to life in you?

Reflect on the time that has passed since we began this Lenten season. Think about the soil of your soul. Where have you been open? Where have you been closed? Make a list of these situations. Ponder the two lists. What do they tell you about yourself?

Be aware of open things during the season of Easter:

- Open doors
- Driving down open roads
- Coffee cups open to receive that warm brew
- Open boxes, jars, and other containers
- Hearts open to receive you with love
- Eyes open to see wonderful things
- Mouths open to receive nourishment
- Books open for learning

Each evening take a few moments to ponder your openness during the day. How aware were you of open things? How aware were you of your own inner openness? How did you respond to challenges to be open that may have arisen during the day?

-The Circle of Life, Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr

PRAYING WITH THE GOSPEL OF SPRING...

These passages from the *Gospel of John* are suggestions for springtime praying. They are texts that portray the return of spring.

Read and meditate on *John 11:1-44*

Lazarus, like an opening bud, comes out of the tomb. He is still bound but he is received back into the hands of his family and friends. Gently they unbind him and set him free. Leaving death behind, he steps back into life.

Spend time reflecting on a moment when you stepped out of the tomb of death and into the womb of life.

Read and meditate on *John 20: 10-18*

Mary, weeping at the tomb, is experiencing the terrible darkness of the death of Jesus. She has not yet seen the hope that stands

waiting in the garden. Then, suddenly Jesus calls her by name and her winter leaps into spring.

Recall a time when your name spoken was a gift of life. Who was it that spoke your name?

Read and meditate on *John 5: 1-9*

A nameless man is lying by the pool. Thirty-eight years is a very long winter. The gospel of spring was far away until he heard the question that was also an invitation: Do you want to be healed? Would you like to arise from your bondage and be set free? Take up your mat and go home.

And what about you? What is the mat of bondage that prevents you from leaping into a life of greater quality? What keeps you from leaping out of winter into spring?

-The Circle of Life, Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr

PRAYERS FOR THE SEASON

Confessions

Forgive O Lord, our indifference to the needs of others. Our thoughtlessness and self-interest. How easy it is to forget, when we are loading our trolleys in the supermarket, that others toiled to bring us our daily food.

Forgive O Lord, our voracious appetites for something new, regardless of where it comes from, and who produces it. The unrealistic prices we pay, and the subsidies we expect.

Forgive O Lord, that we do not equate the results of our own self-interest with the plight of so many producers who live in poverty.

Forgive O Lord, when we turn our heads and pretend we do not see. Amen.

- Irene Sayer found in *Just One Year: Prayer and Worship through the Christian Year*, ed. Timothy Radcliffe OP

The Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despondency, lust for power and idle talk.

But a spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love give to me thy servant.

O Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and not to judge my brother and sister for blessed art thou to the ages of ages.

Amen.

Litany of Humility

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,
Hear me.

From the desire of being esteemed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being loved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being extolled,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being honored,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being praised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being preferred to others,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being consulted,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being approved,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being humiliated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being despised,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of suffering rebukes,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being calumniated,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being wronged,
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being suspected,
Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be praised and I unnoticed,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be preferred to me in everything,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

- Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930)
Cardinal Merry del Val was a Roman Catholic priest who was a member of the College of Cardinals. He served as the Cardinal Secretary of State to Pope Saint Pius X. The process of his beatification is ongoing.

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Lord, make us to walk in your way;
where there is love and wisdom,
there is neither fear nor ignorance;
where there is patience and humility,
there is neither anger nor annoyance;
where there is poverty and joy,
there is neither greed nor ambition;
where there is peace and true prayer,
there is neither care nor restlessness;
where there is the fear of God to guard the heart,
there no enemy can enter;
where there is mercy and prudence,
there is neither excess nor harshness;

This we know through the example of him who laid
down his life for us,
Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

- St. Francis of Assisi

SONG SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SEASON OF EASTER

CBW = Catholic Book of Worship III (1994) / G = Gather, 2nd Edition (1994) /
GP = Glory & Praise (1984)

The music of the Easter season should reflect the images and words by which the people of God have celebrated light's victory over darkness, love's victory over hate, life's triumph over the grave, spring's victory over winter. The fast is over; let us delight in the rich fare their talent has provided.

GATHERING / RECESSIONAL SONGS

All shall be well—GP6	Jesus Christ the risen today – CBW389
All the ends of the earth – CBW548	Jubilate, servite – CBW572
Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord – CBW383, G317	Let heaven rejoice – CBW557, GP115
Alleluia, the Paschal Lamb – GP10	O sons and daughters – CBW404
Easter Alleluia – G307	Sing a new song – CBW563, G384, GP193

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

118 (This is the day) – CBW90-92, G101-102, GP8	66 (Let all the earth) – CBW103, G61
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PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS / MEDITATIVE SONGS

Alive in Christ Jesus – G573	Something which is known – CBW393
Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! – G311	Surrexit Christus – G314
I am the bread of life – G597	We have been told – G501
Now the green blade rises – CBW403	