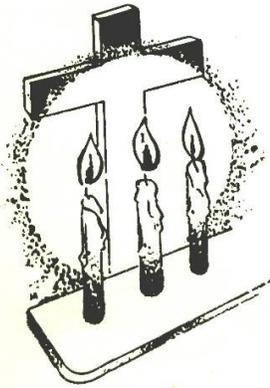


# SandalPrints

Issue # 161 ... Lent ... 2016 AD

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis of Reconciliation - Palm Springs  
www.FranciscanCanticle.com



## LET YOUR LENT BE JOYFUL

*By Richard Brakefield, J.D., O.S.F., KGCHS*

Lent is coming! Those words were more an alarm than an announcement to me and my contemporaries when I was younger.... much, much younger. The gleeful days of our childhood became darker during Lent, a period of time that imposed on us a series of deprivations and sacrifices that seemed merely routine and without much meaning. No wonder that Lent came on with gloom and threat, like a rainy day in the last week of summer vacation. What made it worse was that Lent arrived about the same time that a sense of Spring was afoot, ubiquitous banks of snow were on the wane and baseball was just around the corner. Lent's timing was always unwelcome. It takes some maturity to appreciate the benefit of self discipline and fasting and to view those practices in a positive way -- maturity was not abundant among us kids.

As time passed and my schoolmates and I found our way into young adulthood, we lost contact with each other and how other's attitude toward the season of Lent evolved, I don't know. What I did perceive as I grew older was that far too many adult Catholics I encountered had either dismissed the notion of

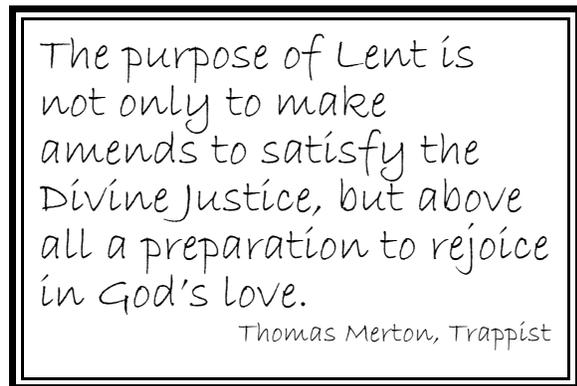
observing Lent or maintained vestiges of the attitude toward that season my friends and I had embraced as children. Some priests, nuns, and parents tend to perpetuate a negative attitude toward Lent unintentionally, of course, by emphasizing that children prepare for Easter by spending the forty days of Lent denying themselves something they truly enjoy. Kids like me who chose to give up things like creamed onions were not considered among the elite of the repentant but were deemed to be shirkers. In a sense, I suppose we were less committed to the lenten spirit they we should have been. Given what I could see of the general attitude of adults at the time, the lenten spirit lack spirit.

In my adult years I have come to know that Lent is indeed a period of preparation for Good Friday and Easter but my attitude about it has evolved a bit. Lent, in my opinion, should be a time of joyful anticipation, not artificial deprivation. Those who promote the latter, I think, have missed the point. The Church and its liturgy does not teach disaster or promote a theory of spiritual elitism but the good news of God's infinite grace and forgiveness. Not that there is no consequence to dying in the state of unforgiven sin. There is certainly that but the message of Easter is without question the most joyful of any throughout time. Easter does not exist for an elite of the morally upright but for the sinful, the abandoned, the needy, the ungodly. It celebrates that most sincere sacrifice which brings healing to unwell, sets aright moral failures, brings forgiveness to sinners, and stirs the faithful to preach the salvation offered to all mankind. The bodily resurrection of the killed Christ is the most mysterious and terrible of all events in history yet it is the most joyful as well because by that death and resurrection we have ben freed.

Lent is an opportunity that should not be wasted.. Being sinful, weak in faith and dim in knowledge, we should grasp the time and

use it to remind ourselves of our Christian obligation as Christians to announce the good news of forgiveness, salvation, of resurrection. It is also a time to re-establish our commitment to the continuing correction, reform, and renewal of the Church and its work.

So, give up candy, steak, or television watching if you think it helpful in achieving the goal of preparing for the most joyful event of the liturgical year. However you observe Lent this year, I hope you will see the joy in the preparation for Easter. Be renewed and reformed and be joyful!



## LENTEN REFLECTION

Lent has been an intense spiritual experience for followers of Christ throughout the centuries. Christians of ancient Rome early developed impressive Lenten liturgies, centering around the stational churches. For medieval Europeans Lent was a time of prolonged prayer, severe bodily discipline and generous alms giving. Early in this century our grandparents observed Lent with frequent, even daily Mass, public devotional practices and austere fasting.

Thirty some years ago the Second Vatican Council changed the focus of Lent to “a period of closer attention to the Word of God and more ardent prayer” (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, #109). To meet this need the Church proposed a new Lectionary of biblical readings for the Sundays and weekdays of Lent. These carefully balanced selections offer the Christian assembly a rich source for Lenten reflections.

Perhaps at times we find the table of God's Word too lavish for our tastes. Perhaps we do not allow ourselves the time to chew and absorb the Scriptures. It may be we do not

wait sufficiently upon the Lord (Is 30:15), so that his word may flow through the veins of our mind with new insights and through the ventricles of our heart with fervent love, a strong love enabling our hands to reach outward to all our many neighbors.

Each day during Lent the Lord invites us through His prophet:

All who are thirsty,  
come to the water!  
You who have no money,  
come, receive grain and eat;  
Come, without paying and without cost,  
drink wine and milk!

Why spend your money for what is not bread;  
your wages for what fails to satisfy?  
Heed me, and you shall eat well,  
you shall delight in rich fare.  
Come to me heedfully,  
listen, that you may have life. . . .

So shall my word be  
that goes forth from my mouth;  
It shall not return to me void,  
but shall do my will,  
achieving the end for which I sent it.

(Is 55:1-3, 11)

## Franciscan Saints, Blesseds and Holy Ones February 2016

1. Bl. Veridiana of Castel Fiorentino, III Ord.
2. Presentation of the Lord
2. Mother Alexia Hoell, III Ord.
4. St. Joseph of Leonissa, I Ord.
5. Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel, III Ord.
6. St. Peter Baptist, Paul Miki and companions, martyrs of I & II Ord.
7. St. Colette, reformed II Ord.
10. Ash Wednesday
11. Our Lady of Lourdes
14. First Sunday of Lent
17. St. Conrad of Piacenza, hermit III Ord.
21. Second Sunday of Lent
28. Third Sunday of Lent

*Saints often jar us because they challenge our ideas about what we need for “the good life.” “I’ll be happy when ...,” we may say, wasting an incredible amount of time on the periphery of life. People like St. Joseph of Leonissa challenge us to face life courageously and get to the heart of it: life with God. Joseph was a compelling preacher because his life was as convincing as his words.*

We have just enough religion to make us judge and hate but not enough to make us forgive and love one another. -J. Swift

## My Lord

It was His will, His choice, His love,  
That made Him lie upon the cross,  
Open His arms and be nailed down  
And lifted up to die that slow,  
Painful and agonizing death.

He could have refused, been rescued  
By His father's shining angels  
But His love for us is so great  
He chose to die, so He could rise  
And defeat hell and save us all.

We are sinners and we all add  
Our piece of iron to the nails  
That tore His hands and feet apart,  
And our thorn to the painful crown  
That ripped and pierced His head and brow.

It was His choice, to save us all  
Oh don't let it have been in vain.  
Accept His gift and let Him reign.  
Father, help us to be made whole  
And to love Him with all our soul.

*Michelle Sagnimeni, OSF*

## Penitential Prayer of St. Ambrose of Milan

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all,  
take away from me my sins,  
and mercifully kindle in me  
the fire of thy Holy Spirit.  
Take away from me the heart of stone,  
and give me a heart of flesh,  
a heart to love and adore Thee,  
a heart to delight in Thee,  
to follow and enjoy Thee, for Christ's sake, Amen  
*St. Ambrose of Milan (AD 339-397)*

## Penitential Prayer of St. Augustine

O Lord,  
The house of my soul is narrow;  
enlarge it that you may enter in.  
It is ruinous, O repair it!  
It displeases Your sight.  
I confess it, I know.  
But who shall cleanse it,  
to whom shall I cry but to you?  
Cleanse me from my secret faults, O Lord,  
and spare Your servant from strange sins.  
*St. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)*

## From the "Breastplate of St. Patrick":

Christ shield me this day:  
Christ with me,

Christ before me,  
Christ behind me,  
Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me,  
Christ above me,  
Christ on my right,  
Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down,  
Christ when I arise,  
Christ in the heart of every person who  
thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of every person who  
speaks of me,  
Christ in the eye that sees me,  
Christ in the ear that hears me.

## Website Watching

Have you stumbled upon a great website recently that you'd like to share with the readers of SandalPrints? If so, please email it to: [Anthony@FranciscanCanticle.com](mailto:Anthony@FranciscanCanticle.com) and we'll put it into the next issue under Website Watching. This issue's website of interest: if you're planning a trip in the near future please book your plans through us at: **CanticleTravel.com**

## FRIENDS

TWO FRIENDS WERE WALKING  
THROUGH THE DESERT.  
DURING SOME POINT OF THE  
JOURNEY, THEY HAD AN  
ARGUMENT; AND ONE FRIEND  
SLAPPED THE OTHER ONE  
IN THE FACE.

THE ONE WHO GOT SLAPPED  
WAS HURT, BUT WITHOUT  
SAYING ANYTHING,  
WROTE IN THE SAND:

TODAY MY BEST FRIEND  
SLAPPED ME IN THE FACE.

THEY KEPT ON WALKING,  
UNTIL THEY FOUND AN OASIS,  
WHERE THEY DECIDED  
TO TAKE A BATH  
THE ONE WHO HAD BEEN  
SLAPPED GOT STUCK IN THE  
MIRE ! AND STARTED DROWNING,  
BUT THE FRIEND SAVED HIM.

AFTER HE RECOVERED FROM  
THE NEAR DROWNING,  
HE WROTE ON A STONE:

"TODAY MY BEST FRIEND  
SAVED MY LIFE "

THE FRIEND WHO HAD SLAPPED  
AND SAVED HIS BEST FRIEND  
ASKED HIM, "AFTER I HURT YOU,  
YOU WROTE IN THE SAND AND NOW,  
YOU WRITE ON A STONE, WHY?"

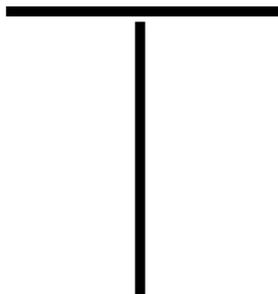
THE FRIEND REPLIED  
"WHEN SOMEONE HURTS US  
WE SHOULD WRITE IT DOWN  
IN SAND, WHERE WINDS OF  
FORGIVENESS CAN ERASE IT AWAY.  
BUT, WHEN SOMEONE DOES  
SOMETHING GOOD FOR US,  
WE MUST ENGRAVE IT IN STONE  
WHERE NO WIND  
CAN EVER ERASE IT."

LEARN TO WRITE  
YOUR HURTS IN  
THE SAND AND TO  
CARVE YOUR  
BENEFITS IN STONE.

THEY SAY IT TAKES A  
MINUTE TO FIND A SPECIAL  
PERSON, AN HOUR TO  
APPRECIATE THEM, A DAY  
TO LOVE THEM, BUT THEN  
AN ENTIRE LIFE  
TO FORGET THEM.

"One day you will ask me which is more important, you or my life, and I will say my life, and you will walk away not knowing that you are my life."

Let us pray for the intentions of those who asked us to pray for them.



A brother came to Abba Poemen and said: Abba, a variety of thoughts are coming into my mind and I am in danger. The old man took him out in the air and said: Open your robe and take hold of the wind. And he answered: No, I cannot do it. The old man said: If you cannot do it, neither can you prevent those thoughts from coming in. But what you should do is to stand firm against them.

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Place your mind before the mirror of  
eternity!  
Place your soul in the brilliance of glory!  
Place your heart in the figure of the divine  
substance!  
And transform your whole being into the  
image of the Godhead Itself through  
contemplation!  
So that you too may feel what His friends  
feel as they taste the hidden sweetness  
which God Himself has reserved from the  
beginning  
for those who love Him.

St. Clare of Assisi

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