

POINTS OF INTEREST

Support. Christians in Lebanon are suffering. Please pray for Lebanon! If you are able to relieve some of the suffering, please visit: www.caritas.org.lb

Lenten Liturgical Schedule. Let us gather during this Lent each **Friday at 6:30 PM** and pray the *Ramsho* and have the traditional Maronite Service of *The Adoration of the Cross*.

GOD'S NOT DEAD. Join us in our Lenten Discussion Groups to watch the beautiful movie **God's Not Dead** on Wednesday **February 25 at 6. 30 PM** in the church hall.

Maronite Christian Formation. Starting **March 1**, the children of St Ann will meet for the Maronite Christian Formation (Sunday School). The focus will be on the **Maronite Tradition and Theology**. The meetings will be held in the church hall on the **1st and 3rd Sunday** of the month from **9:00 AM - 9:45 AM**.

St. Patrick's Day. The Annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Luncheon will be held on **March 15** at 11:00 a.m. The cost will be \$8.00 for adults; \$5.00 for children; children under 5 are free. However, a volunteer is needed to Co-Chair our Annual St. Patrick's Day.

Contributions 2014. If you want to receive a copy of your contributions for 2014, contact the parish office before **March 1**.

Bulletin Advertisements. The time has come for us again to seek sponsors for the publication of the parish bulletin. There are several options. For as little as \$8 per month, — you can publish your message or advertisement. For more info call the parish office.

Daughters of St Ann. Dues for 2015 (\$65.00) checks should be made payable to the Daughters of St Ann and submitted to Mrs. Georgette Hannoush or placed in an envelope in the collection basket clearly marked with "Daughters Dues 2015".

Memorials & Liturgy Intentions. If you like to offer a Memorial or a Divine Liturgy intention for your loved ones, write or call the parish office. In preparing your will, you might wish to arrange for the celebration of Divine Liturgies for yourself and your family.

Verse Of The Week

"There is no soundness in my flesh because of thy indignation; there is no health in my bones because of my sin."

(Cf. Psalm 38:4)

St. Damien of Molokai

Born in Tremelo, Belgium, on January 3, 1840, he joined the Sacred Heart's Fathers in 1860. He was born Joseph but received the name Damien in religious life. In 1864, he was sent to Honolulu, Hawaii, where he was ordained. For the next 9 years he worked in missions on the big island, Hawaii. In 1873, he went to the leper colony on Molokai, after volunteering for the assignment. Damien cared for lepers of all ages, especially for the children segregated in the colony for whom he created an orphanage. He was not just their priest, but a builder of homes and their doctor, too. He dressed their ulcers, and tended the sick and dying at their bedsides. In 1885, he announced, "I am one of you," he was a leper yet he continued to build hospitals, clinics, and churches, and some six hundred coffins. He died on April 15, 1889 on Molokai. He was declared venerable in 1977, beatified on June 4, 1995 and canonized on October 11, 2009. He is the patron saint of lepers and outcasts.

Saint's Quote

"When you look at the crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you then.

When you look at the Sacred Host, you understand how much Jesus loves you now."

Mother Teresa

ENTERING LENT

Linguistically, lent is derived from an old English word meaning springtime. Etymologically, lent points to the coming of spring and it invites us to slow down our lives so as to be able to take stock of ourselves.

However, the popular mindset understands lent mostly as a season within which we are asked to fast from certain normal, healthy pleasures so as to better ready ourselves for the feast of Easter.

Moreover, Lent has always been understood as a time of us to metaphorically spend forty days in the desert like Jesus, unprotected by normal nourishment so as to have to face “Satan” and the “wild animals” and see whether the “angels” will indeed come and look after us when we reach that point where we can no longer look after ourselves.

The normal food that we eat, distracted ordinary life, works to shield us from the deeper chaos that lurks beneath the surface of our lives. Lent invites us to stop eating whatever protects us from having to face the desert that is inside of us. It invites us to feel our smallness, to feel our vulnerability, to feel our fears, and to open ourselves up the chaos of the desert so that we can finally give the angels a chance to feed us. That’s the Christian ideal of lent, to face one’s chaos. To supplement this, I would like to offer three rich mythical images, each of which helps explain one aspect of lent and fasting:

In every culture, there are ancient stories, myths, which teach that all of us, at times, have to sit in the ashes. We all know, for example, the story of Cinderella. The moral of the story is clear: Before you get to be beautiful, before you get to marry the prince or princess, before you get to go to the great feast, you must first spend some lonely time in the ashes, humbled, smudged, tending to duty and the unglamorous, waiting. Lent is that season, a time to sit in the ashes. It is not incidental that we begin lent by marking our foreheads with ashes.

The second image is that of being a child of Saturn. The ancients believed that Saturn was the star of sadness, of heaviness, of melancholy. Accordingly they weren’t always taken aback when someone fell under its spell, namely, when someone felt sad or depressed. Indeed they believed that everyone had to spend certain seasons of his or her life being a child of Saturn, that is, sitting in heaviness, sitting in sadness, waiting patiently while some important inner thing worked itself out inside the soul. Sometimes elders or saints would put themselves voluntarily under Saturn, namely, like Jesus going into the desert, they would sit in a self-induced heaviness, in the hope that this melancholy would be means to reach some new depth of soul. That too is the function of lent.

Finally there is the rich image, found in some ancient mythologies, of letting our tears reconnect us with the flow of the water of life, of letting our tears reconnect us to the origins of life. Tears, as we know, are salt-water. That is not without deep significance. The oceans too are salt water and, as we know too, all life takes its origins there. Hence, we get the mystic and poetic idea that tears reconnect us to the origins of life, that tears regenerate us, that tears cleanse us in a life-giving way, and that tears deepen the soul by letting it literally taste the origins of life. Given the truth of that, and we have all experienced its truth, tears too are a desert to be entered into as a Lenten practice, a vehicle to reach new depths of soul.

The need for lent is experienced everywhere: Without sublimation we can never attain what is sublime. To truly enter a feast there must first be a fast. To come properly to Easter there must first be a time of desert, ashes, heaviness, and tears.

By Ronald Rolheiser



The Pope Tweets

“During Lent, let us find concrete ways to overcome our indifference.”

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