

LENTEN MEDITATION

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HEART THIS LENT

By Vinita Hampton Wright



How do you prepare for Lent? How have you prepared in the past? What are your ideas about what should happen during Lent?

We have the traditional Catholic practices of praying, fasting, and almsgiving. So, we pray more than usual, or we pray with different emphases. We eat smaller or fewer meals or give up a favorite food or drink group.

We give more of our resources or give them specifically to special works of mercy during Lent. Prayer, fasting, and charitable giving continue to be quite good practices during Lent or at any time.

But, you might think, how do I prepare myself for this season? What needs to happen within so that I can practice with more integrity and intention whatever I'm doing on the outside? There are plenty of ideas for actions and practices during Lent; coming up with ideas usually is not the problem. But we don't want to do anything simply to be doing it, even if it's a good thing. We don't want to make a list of merciful works so that we can place a checkmark beside each one as we accomplish it. It's good to have a plan for doing. It's also good to have a plan for being.

Ask God, every day,
"What does my soul need?"

How do I want to be during Lent this year? More quiet and thoughtful? More open to God's desires? Better able to sit with people who need me? More attentive to sacred readings, whether in church or in private? Do I need to be more compassionate toward my own fears and failings? Do I need to become more courageous about using the gifts God has given me? In the days prior to Lent, try one or more of these suggestions.

- Ask God, every day, "What does my soul need?" Just ask and wait quietly. Because we're very good at fooling ourselves about how we're doing, it might take several days of praying this question before we're truly open and humble enough to know the answer.
- Ask God, every day, "What about my life makes you happy?" Yes, when God looks at your life, some parts of it—perhaps many aspects of it—bring joy to God's heart. Think of how your children or grandchildren or other people close to you make you happy. God is in relationship with you, which means that your sins grieve God's heart but your growth, love, freedom and kindness also bring joy to our God of the universe. You will probably need to pray this a few times before you are willing to consider that you give God pleasure, that you make God happy in any way. Stick with this little prayer and keep listening.
- Tell God, and yourself, every day, "I want to be open to the graces of this Lenten season." Maybe you're not open right now, or you're not as open and willing as you'd like to be or think you should be. What else is new? We can always open our lives a bit more, let go of more stuff, listen better, and do more quickly and passionately what we know helps nurture God's kingdom on earth.

This is a beginning: three short and simple reflections to ready yourself for the holy season.

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B.C. V6R3V9
ESTABLISHED 1923

MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

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Pastor

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Associate Pastor

Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

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olphchurchvancouver



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

March 5, 2017

1st Sunday of Lent

A Meeting of Hearts and Minds at LA Congress

Dear Parishioners,

I was blessed to attend the LA Congress last week with office staff and teachers of Our Lady's School. It was quite an amazing sight to see nearly 40,000 Catholics of diverse cultures gather together to celebrate our faith and delve deeper into ways and means of evangelizing it. The liturgies had interesting cultural and social justice themes with powerful speakers which filled the arena of the Anaheim Convention Centre with light, sound, music and the presence of the Spirit. What was great was that the beauty and diversity of the Catholic church could be experienced over the space of a few days. The talks gave us much to digest and mull over.

Among the highlights was the much-sought-after speaker Bishop Robert Barron who had a powerful message about how we need to intensify the Gospel message against the loud voices of atheists in order to keep our children in the faith. The hot issue of immigration was also a very poignant message shared by Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego. Bishop McElroy has been in the news for his strong defense of the plight of immigrants in the United States.

The talks were a good reminder that the world we live in continues to become a smaller place and the problems faced elsewhere are part of our problem too. Let us remember all in prayer.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R



Have mercy, O Lord, for we have sinned. - Psalm 51

NEWS & NOTICES

2016 Tax Receipts: Your 2016 tax receipt is available for pick-up from the Parish Office. Our hours are Mon-Fri 9am-4pm.

No Monday 8am Mass: There will be no 8am Mass on Monday because of the funeral Mass at 11am.

Benny Fernandes Funeral Mass: A funeral Mass will be held at OLPH for Benny Fernandes 11am Monday March 6 with prayers on the evening before at 7pm.

Spring Break: OLPH School students are on Spring Break March 13-24. Friday Masses remain at the usual time, 9am.

Redemptorists in the Arctic: Fr Jon Hansen, pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Inuvik will give a presentation after this Sunday's 9am Mass about his experiences in the Northwest Territories. Get your coffee in the hall and join us in the Madonna Room.

Praise & Worship: OLPH Youth Ministry will host a Lenten Praise & Worship on Sunday March 12 at 4:30pm. The theme is *God's Mercy is Unending*.

CWL Bursary: There are many advantages to being a CWL member. One little known advantage available to families of CWL members is access to various educational bursaries offered by the Vancouver Diocesan Council, the Provincial Diocesan Council and the National Council. There are a number of bursaries available with deadlines at the end of March. For more information, please see: <http://www.vancouvercwl.ca/cms/wp-content/uploads/bursary-chart-2016.pdf>

Point Grey Lenten Prayer Series: Each Wednesday during Lent at 12 noon, the Point Grey Ministerial is sponsoring a half hour service in various Churches in the Point Grey Area. Point Grey Lenten Series:
March 8 – St. Anselm's Anglican Church, 5210 University Blvd.
March 15th – West Point Grey United Church, 4595 W. 8th Ave.
March 22 – St. Helen's Anglican Church, 4405 W.8th Ave.
March 29 – Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, 4000 W. 11th Ave.
April 5th - West Point Grey Baptism Church, 4509 W. 11th Ave.

Redemptorist Associates Mandating: If you are interested in becoming a Redemptorist Associate and would like to commit some time to being a supporter of the work of the Redemptorists, we invite you to become a Redemptorist Associate. Provincial Superior Fr. Mark Miller will be here for the mandating to be held on Sunday March 12 at 6:30pm. Please note change of date.

Children's Liturgy: There will be no Children's Liturgy this weekend at the Sunday 11am Mass. Children's Liturgy will resume on Sunday March 12.

Food Bank: This week's Food Bank drive is for baby food. Thank you for your help!

PREP Mass: Children in the PREP program will be collecting candy, packaged cookies and cash donations at all Masses this weekend. All donations will go to the Door Is Open and Missionaries of Charity. Your support would be very much appreciated.

Pro-life Mass & Vigil: A peaceful, prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents will be held on Saturday, March 4, at 9 a.m. for Mass at St. Joseph Parish, Mission, followed by Rosary at Mission Hospital. For more info., visit rcav.org/pro-life-mass-and-prayer-vigil.

PRAYER FOR PEACEFUL REPOSE

Please pray for the souls of Benny Fernandes, Giuseppe Ciresi, Irene Mottley and Annie Bryer.

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

-- Revelation 14:13

Stewardship Reflection

"It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve." -- Matthew 4:10

Tempted between the riches and power of this world and service to God, Jesus chose service to His Father. If we wish to truly follow Jesus, we, too, must decide to turn away from power and riches and put God at the center of our lives. How is God calling you to serve?

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

MARCH

LENTE TALKS

Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love).
Lenten Talks Friday 7:30pm- 8pm after the 7pm Way of the Cross.
Mar 10: Looking to Jesus: The Vocation of the Family
Mar 17: Love in Marriage
Mar 24: Towards A Better Education of Children
Mar 31: The Spirituality of Marriage & the Family
Apr 7: Pastoral Perspectives

APRIL

PARISH MISSION April 2 – 5

RECEIVE, GIVE THANKS, BREAK AND SHARE: THE EUCHARIST UNFOLDING THE MERCY OF GOD

Presented by the Mission Team: Deacon Bob Williston and Joan Williston

Sunday Evening: "Receive the Mercy of God." April 2, 6pm

Like the Father in the Prodigal Son story, the mercy of God is ever-present, and waiting for our return home. The mercy is freely given, with no strings attached. God's mercy is best seen in the encounters between Jesus and those most in need of His mercy!

Monday Evening: "Give Thanks for God's Mercy." April 3, 7pm

Our response to this invitation of mercy is molded deep in our hearts by the Eucharist we celebrate regularly. The Greek word "Eucharistia" means to give thanks! We can fashion a heart of gratitude both in our prayer life and in our relationships with people.

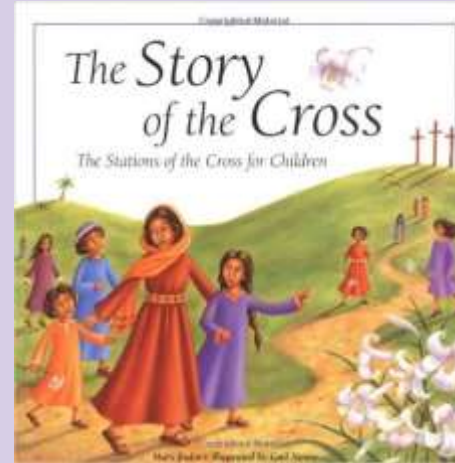
Tuesday Evening: "Our Brokenness Needs the Merciful Touch of Jesus" April 4, 7pm

The healing touch of Christ from the cross reaches out to any wounded heart. His gentleness and compassion can transform and heal us when we find it difficult to love or be loved. "By his wounds we are healed."

Wednesday Evening: "Sharing the Mercy of God with a World in Need" April 5, 7pm

The Eucharist is meant to transform us into a people of compassion and care. We live in a world so desperately in need of our healing and merciful presence. The mercy we have received is meant to be shared with others.

Simple Lenten Activities for Kids



1. Make a Prayer Chain: List 40 intentions or people on 40 slips of paper for the 40 days of Lent. Link them together into a chain. Rip one off each morning of Lent and pray for that need.
2. Bury the Hallelujah: Explain why we don't proclaim hallelujah during Lent. To symbolize, write out hallelujah on paper and bury it in the yard or put it away in a box.
3. Temptation Cookies: While baking cookies, tell your children about the temptation of Jesus in the desert. When the cookies are done, leave them on the table, but they cannot eat them until the next day. Talk about how tempting this might be and what we can do to resist temptation.
4. Memorize a Prayer: The Act of Contrition would be a good one for Lent, but if your kids already know it, pick a prayer they are unfamiliar with.
5. Color Easter Eggs: While you do, talk about why they are part of Easter. They represent new life.
6. Watch an Easter Related Movie or Show: Veggie Tales and Storykeepers are just a couple of the many series that have Easter specials.
7. Read Easter Books: I like The Crippled Lamb, The Story of Easter, and The Legend of the Three Trees
8. Children's (or regular) Stations of the Cross: Visit one, Read one, Color one, etc.
9. Make Pretzels: They symbolize arms crossed in prayer. Find out more here.
10. Pick a Service Activity: It can be something small like paying for the person behind you in line at lunch, or do something bigger like visiting a nursing home to chat with residents. Talk about the Corporal Works of Mercy today.

www.callherhappy.com

LA CONGRESS

Embracing Trust and Diversity at Congress

By Bertilla Watanabe

Like the city blocks, the size of cookies and salads, everything about the LA Congress was huge. The annual Religious Education Congress sponsored by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Religious Education, is now the United States' largest gathering of Roman Catholics. The official stats for this year's Congress are not in yet but if last year's numbers are anything to go by, over 35,000 catechists, teachers, clergy, youth and lay volunteers attended the 4-day event at the Anaheim Convention Center.

This year's theme, *Embrace Trust*, was an invitation to trust in God's loving Providence. In his welcome message, LA Archbishop Jose Gomez announced that this was an excellent opportunity for us to grow in the knowledge of our Catholic faith as well as in love and devotion to the Lord.

There were 16 Eucharistic Liturgies of different character – African-American, Hawaiian, Celtic, Spanish and liturgies with themes - Care of the Earth, Immigrants, Exiles, Refugees, the Joy of Love, Preservation of Peace & Justice as well as Young Adult gatherings, Evening Prayer and Taizé services. From Gregorian chant to gospel choirs; Aztec dancers to Vietnamese and African drummers an enormous amount of work was put into reflecting the unity and diversity of the church of Los Angeles.

OLPH Teachers' Remarks



Principal Lora Clarke: *I have attended the Congress many times and I am always amazed at the experience of being one of 40,000 Catholic educators in attendance. It certainly brings home the fact that we are part of a larger church! This year's theme, "Embrace Trust" was explored by so many of the speakers and is very timely for our world. I very much enjoy going to the Congress with our teachers because it provides them the opportunity to hear many speakers that they would not be able to otherwise. It also gives them an opportunity to interact with the wider Catholic community. Everyone there is so friendly and hearing the mission of other Catholic educators helps to affirm what the teachers are doing and also gives them a new perspective on their work.*



Sandra Reis (Grade 7A): *The conference was fantastic. There was a wide variety of topics to attend. The speakers were knowledgeable and engaging. I will be able to apply much of what I learned right away. Fr. Tony was inspiring and funny as usual, but he reminded his audience of our responsibility as Catholic Christians and of our mission to care deeply. In addition, the resources that were available were amazing*



Liz Scali (Grade 2A): *The LA Congress was an incredibly humbling experience. From the beautiful opening ceremony to each individual workshop I attended, the conference truly fostered a spirit of togetherness. As an educator, it was very refreshing to receive this professional development opportunity and be educated by inspirational individuals. I know the learning I experienced during the conference are lessons that can be translated into my own teaching practice and personal life. What struck me most was the incredible diversity at the LA Congress; the music, resources, topics, and versatile experiences shared by enlightening speakers, helped to create a positive environment that was very empowering. The themes of acceptance, trust, peace and social change overall left me feeling grounded in my faith and grateful for the experience.*



Gillian Armstrong(Grade 4B): *It was as incredible as everyone said it would be. A theme through some of the talks I heard was about losing members of the faith. Within our parishes, we're very successful ministering to children, youth, and parents. However, there's a gap between youth programs and adult programs where the Catholic faith loses young adults to the busyness and stress of self-discovery. Similarly, young families who seek community find it in organized sports and extra-curricular activities rather than finding it at their parishes. The suggestion here was to expand and strengthen marriage and baptismal preparation into fuller ministries. We forget that sometimes we need to evangelize to Catholics, too. The take home message was that a personal, face-to-face invitation can go a long way to grow and maintain our Church.*

No conference in Anaheim is complete without a trip to Disneyland! Parish staff and OLPH school teachers spent time together to relax and have some fun after their busy conference schedule.

