

LENTEN MEDITATION

St. Alphonsus' Writings on Lent

Saint Alphonsus published the meditations that follow in 1767. They are part of a much longer work entitled *The Way of Salvation and of Perfection*. Although the meditations can be enjoyed and appreciated as they are presented, it was Saint Alphonsus' intention that they be used within the context of meditation. For many people the idea of meditation can be threatening, but it does not have to be. For example, the method of meditation proposed by Saint Alphonsus is easily learned and practiced. You do not need to be an expert at praying to profit from this kind of meditative practice. All that is required is a willingness to communicate with the Lord.

The proposed method of meditation consists of three parts: preparation, consideration, and conclusion. In the preparation we remind ourselves of the presence of God, we pray for humility, and we pray for inspiration. We say, "My God, I believe that you are present, and I adore you. O my God, I am sorry for having offended you. Eternal Father, for the love of Jesus and Mary, grant me inspiration in this meditation, that I may profit by it." Then pray a Hail Mary to the Virgin Mother and a Glory Be to the Father, in honor of your guardian angel.

The second step is what St. Alphonsus calls the "consideration." This step includes reading a reflection for the day, such as something from scripture or a spiritual writing and then some time spent recalling the Passion of Christ. It must be understood that the fruit of prayer does not consist in meditating but rather in producing A) affections (prayers of praise), for example, affections of humility, confidence, love, sorrow, offering, and resignation to the will of God; B) in making petitions, especially in imploring God to grant us perseverance and his holy love; C) in making resolution to avoid some particular sin and practicing some particular virtue.

Finally in the conclusion, we pray, "I thank you God, for the insight that you have given me. I intend to keep the resolutions that I have made and I ask for the necessary grace from you to fulfill them." Never forget to recommend to God the poor souls in purgatory and all poor sinners. Never, regardless of how you might feel, no matter how cold or how weary you may be, omit your daily meditation.

God, then, has died for me; shall I be able to love anything else but God?

The Death of Jesus Christ

How is it possible for us to believe that Jesus was willing to die for us? Yet we must believe it, because faith teaches it. The Council of Nicea commands us to confess: "I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who for us and for our salvation was crucified for us, suffered, died, and was buried."

And if it is true, O God of love, that you died for the love of your people, can there be anyone who believes this and does not love you, so loving a God? But, O God, of those who are guilty of such ingratitude, I am one! Not only have I not loved you, my Redeemer, but I have many times, for the sake of gratifying my miserable and depraved inclinations, renounced your grace and your love.

Lord and my God, you died for me; how could I, knowing this, so often have disowned you and turned my back on you? But you, my Savior, did come from heaven to save what was lost. My ingratitude, therefore, does not deprive me of the hope of pardon. Yes, O Jesus! I hope that you will pardon me from all the offenses which I have committed against you, through the death which you suffered for me on Mount Calvary. O that I could die of grief and of love as often as I think of the offenses that I have committed against the love which you have shown to me. Make known to me, O Lord, what I must do from this day on to make amends for my ingratitude. Keep in my mind a continual remembrance of the bitter death you suffered for me, that I may love you and never more offend you.

God, then, has died for me; shall I be able to love anything else but God? No, my Jesus, I will love no one but you. You have loved me too much. You can do no more to compel me to love you. By my sins I have obliged you to cast me away from your face, but you did not abandon me forever. You think of me with tender affection and you invite me to love you, and I will no longer resist. I love you, my only good. I love you, my God, who are worthy of infinite love. I love you, my God, who has died for me. However, I do not love you enough; increase my love! Grant that I may turn away from all things, and forget all else, so that I may learn to please you and to love you, my Redeemer, my love, and my all. O Mary, my hope, recommend me to your divine Son!

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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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Associate Pastor

Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

March 19, 2017

3rd Sunday of Lent

Dear Parishioners,

Last weekend, 18 people from our parish made a commitment to become Redemptorist Associates. These are parishioners who are drawn to the spirit and mission of the Redemptorists and would like to support our work as members of the laity. Over the years many Redemptorists all over the world have been blessed by friends and benefactors who, like this group, made a conscious decision to share their spiritual gifts and talents in spreading the message of plentiful redemption.

From the beginning of his mission, St. Alphonsus recognized the potential of lay people in promoting the work of spreading the Gospel message. Many of them were trained at that time to be catechists at the evening chapels which Alphonsus held.

Let me share a little excerpt from the *Autumn Memoirs of St Alphonsus Liguori* by Fr. Joseph Oppitz, C.Ss.R. writing in an intimate first person literary style: "The poverty of the slums kept many of the poor away from church so I concluded that if they would not come to the church, the church would go to them. That is how I started the whole series of what we called evening chapels." Actually they were storefront chapels where the simple folk gathered at night to learn about the Lord and then praise him in song and prayer."

Does storefront beginnings ring a bell? That's similar to how our parish began too! The evening chapels of St. Alphonsus became so popular that there were about a dozen of them running at the same time. To help with these, a group of lay folk were trained to carry out their work and became the backbone of this apostolate.

The first year of our Redemptorist Associates will be spent learning about the history and spirituality of our Congregation. We trust the Holy Spirit will guide us in the direction that further collaboration will then take. I urge you to keep them in your prayers.

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



O that today you would listen to the voice of the Lord. - Psalm 95

NEWS & NOTICES

Lenten Reconciliation: There will be a Lenten Reconciliation Service at 2pm Sun April 2 in the church. Several priests will be present to hear Confessions that afternoon.

Madonna Group: We meet at noon in the Church hall, a light lunch is served, program starts at 12:30pm. Open to ALL parishioners, \$2 at the door. Volunteers available for those seniors who need a ride. Please contact Monica Cheung at 604-739-8837 if you are interested in attending.
Upcoming Programs: April 5 – Mission talk/songs with Deacon Bob and Joan Williston.
May 3 – Parkinson's Disease Potpourri: All you need to know about Parkinson's disease. Presented by the Parkinson Society B.C.

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

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

Marriage Help: Retrouvaille offers a welcoming and loving space to couples who have been living with the misery of a failing marriage. Retrouvaille offers hope: hope that it is not too late, hope of a different and better marriage. Retrouvaille helps couples to show each other mercy through the opportunities it provides to listen, to forgive, to be reconciled and to move into their futures believing that God loves them and with His help and their efforts, their marriages can be healed and restored. Retrouvaille provides help for marriage problems/difficulties/crises. For more information about the upcoming Retrouvaille Weekend program for couples, contact our registration team: Marc and Candice Tews @ 604-530-6710 or visit www.retrouvaillevancouver.com/

Spring Institute: Discover the beauty of the faith through a one day session at our Spring Institute. A variety of one-day courses will be offered, from *Basics of the Faith* to *Overview of the Liturgy*. This is an opportunity to continue adult faith formation or earn a Catechetical Certificate toward your ministry. Saturday, April 29, from 10-4 p.m. at Holy Cross Secondary School, Surrey. Cost for full-day course: \$40 (before April 24) or half-day course: \$20 (before April 24). Lunch included. To register or for more info., visit <http://rcav.org/oc-spring>.

St. Patrick's Plant Sale: St. Patrick's High School Choir is holding a plant sale on Sat April 1 from 10-2pm in the St. Pat's Parish parking lot. This is a fundraiser for their annual Spirit Alive Chan Concert. Tickets for the concert are available for purchase at \$25 in the school office.

Women's Vocations Weekend: On the weekend of April 7 - 9, there will be a Monastic Life Workshop for ladies interested in the consecrated life, at Westminster Abbey, Mission, BC. For more information call 604-826-8975.

40 Days for Life: During the season of Lent, all are invited to a prayerful vigil outside BC Women's Hospital from March 1-April 9. The campaign is a 24-hour vigil. However, for safety reasons most members pray outdoors in the daytime and at participating churches at night. For the full 40 Days Adoration schedule, please go to rcav.org.

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 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.

Lenten Liturgy and Lunch Series 2017: Fill Your Bowl with Life: Join our friends at St. Mark's for faith food and fellowship. *Faith:* Join us every Wednesday during Lent (March 1 to April 12), at 12:10 p.m. at St. Mark's Parish, Vancouver for Mass. *Food:* Stay awhile! Get to know our small campus community over a warm homemade meal of vegetarian soup and bread, free of charge. Lunch will be served after Mass each week in Plato's Cave Café. *Fellowship:* Come and listen to compelling stories, and discuss issues threatening human life. A different topic every week during Lent!

Stewardship Reflection

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again.” -- JOHN 4:13

Jesus reminds us that material things, even something as basic as water, can never satisfy us for long. When we build our lives around material possessions we always want more. True Joy and Peace only comes when we follow Jesus; when we become more “God-centered” and less “self-centered”.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

MARCH

LENENT TALKS

Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love).
Lenten Talks Friday 7:30pm- 8pm after the 7pm Way of the Cross.
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.



LENENT ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Grades 1–2 Lenten Activities

Links of Love

Help children brainstorm simple ways to make helpful and meaningful contributions to family, school, and parish life. Every time someone cheerfully serves or helps another, the child can make that act of love concrete by adding a link to a Love Chain. Have children decorate their links. Use the Love Chain to decorate the room for Easter.

Lenten Promise Posters

Help children brainstorm a list of ways that they can change their lives during Lent to become more like Jesus. Write ideas on the board. Invite children to choose one or two ideas that they will do this Lent. Then have children make posters to remind them of their Lenten promises. Have children take their posters home and display them where they will be seen each day.

Grades 3–4 Lenten Activities

Pray the Rosary

Distribute rosaries to children. Say: *The Rosary is a great prayer to pray during Lent. If you choose to pray this prayer, you might wish to use the Sorrowful Mysteries. Like the Stations of the Cross, the Sorrowful Mysteries help us remember Jesus' Passion and Death.* Pray together the Rosary, using the Sorrowful Mysteries.

Pray the Stations of the Cross

Arrange with your catechetical leader to take children to church to pray the Stations of the Cross. You may wish to pray the Stations by using the special online version.

Ideas to Share: Stations of the Cross

By the 15th century, churches in Europe were building “stations,” making it possible for Christians who could not make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to follow in Jesus’ footsteps in his last hours. Eventually the Church settled on the 14 stations we now have.

Celebrate Reconciliation

Arrange with your catechetical leader to have children celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If this is not possible, share with children the opportunities your parish offers to celebrate the sacrament. Explain that celebrating Reconciliation during Lent is a great way to prepare our hearts to celebrate Easter.

Coaching Children to Pray

Encourage children to pray the Stations of the Cross as a special way to reflect on Jesus’ journey.

Grades 5–7 Lenten Activities

Illustrating Jesus' Journey

Distribute art supplies. Instruct children to make their own illustration of Jesus overcoming temptation in the desert. When children have finished, invite volunteers to share their drawing with the class. Display children’s work around the classroom.

Lenten To-Do List

Tell children that planning out their steps to grow closer to God will make them more achievable. Instruct children to write their plans for growing closer to God during Lent in a bulleted list. Remind children to focus on different ways they can pray, fast, and give alms. Encourage children to share their plans with their families. Tell children to hang their list in a place where they can review it daily during Lent.

The Number 40

Say: *Biblical authors used numbers to emphasize the symbolic significance of an event. For example, the number 40 is used to symbolize a period during which people were tested. Have children find examples of the number 40 in the Bible. Invite volunteers to write examples on the board. (Noah endured 40 days and 40 nights of rain; the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years; Moses spent 40 days and nights on the mountaintop before descending with the Ten Commandments; Jesus remained in the desert for 40 days without eating.)*

Coaching Children to Pray

Assure children that the Holy Spirit is always present with them in their Lenten prayers, fasting, and good works to strengthen their resolve and guide their decisions. They can call on the Holy Spirit for help and guidance anywhere, anytime.



PARISH LIFE

Commissioning of Redemptorist Associates

Lay supporters of the Redemptorists were officially commissioned by the Provincial Superior, Fr. Mark Miller on Saturday and Sunday evenings after the 5pm at the Redemptorist chapel in the rectory. A total of 18 people, who will be founding members at our parish, were enrolled.

Redemptorist Associates collaborate in many ways with the works of the Congregation. The first thing they are called to do is understand the spirituality and history of St. Alphonsus and the congregation he started. Future projects will depend on how the group feels called to collaborate through prayer and discernment of the Holy Spirit. Congratulations to all who have made this commitment!