

SAINT FRANCIS EXCHANGE

The Newsletter and Bulletin of the Oratory of Saint Francis of Assisi

FEBRUARY 2016 – LENT

LETTER FROM THE MONSIGNOR

BE mindful therefore from whence thou art fallen: and do penance, and do the first works. Or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou do penance.

– Apocalypse 2:5

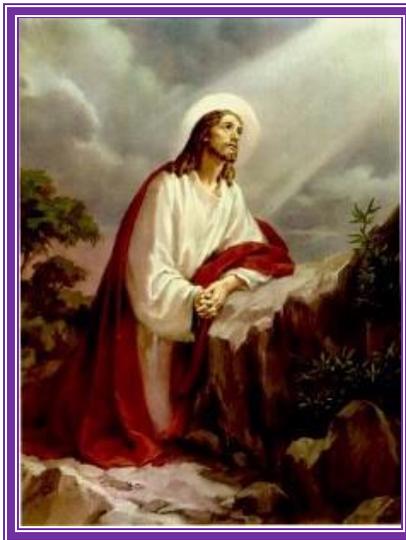
LENT comes to us quite early this year: Ash Wednesday is the 10th of February. Perhaps God is calling us to an early penance because the world is in such need for it.

So often Lent is a missed opportunity, many do not take it seriously or, worse, lose their zeal in its midst. I have often taught that if even a handful of the faithful took their Lenten observance seriously (*very seriously*) there would be a noticeable and tangible difference in the world. I wish that every soul faithful to holy tradition (no matter what their theological opinions are) would unite in purpose for their conversion, and the conversion of all sinners, we would see such incredible graces. PRAYER, PENANCE and SACRIFICE, the three pillars of Lent, are meant to transform us and to please God Almighty.

We live in such a convenient and privileged world that what we consider “suffering” a generation ago considered luxury. As a young

boy I can remember a time when none of my toys had (or needed) batteries...I remember a new bat or football was all I needed or wanted, or a new book. Simpler times...

Today it seems so foreign to willingly suffer for God and to repent of sin, and yet people starve or deprive themselves to “look” better. People frequent the gym, run marathons and the like for human accolades, they strive to constantly improve their bodies with no thoughts to improving their souls: they seek after that perishable crown and pass by the imperishable (cf. I Corinthians 9:24 – 27).



But why do penance? In penance we show God our sorrow for sin and strive to overcome sin; for in sin is spiritual death: *For the wages of sin is death* S. Paul teaches (Romans 6:23). The sin of our first father Adam continues to wreak havoc upon us, again S. Paul: *Wherefore by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned*

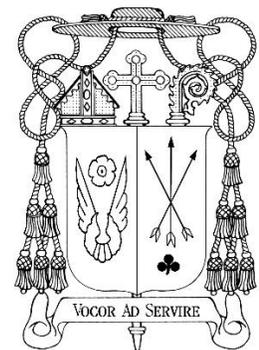
(Romans 5:12). Penance will help us overcome the spiritual death of sin and its result: hell. Penance will help us regain the friendship of God and His saints. Penance will create in us a *new man*, who lives in the light and grace of God. Penance will make us saints!

It is my prayer for the whole Church, especially the faithful of the Oratory of S. Francis, and all our Missions and Mass Centres, that we all become saints this Lent, and that when we again sing the blessed *Alleluia* we are able to stand with *the saints in light* (cf. Colossians 1:12)!

As always, I am most grateful for your prayers and support. Be assured of my paternal benediction and prayers, especially at Holy Mass. I remain,

In Christ the awaited King,

Monsignor ✠ Thomas JF Sebastian



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Why do we address the Lord the Holy Ghost as “Comforter” rather than “Paraclete” in the Divine Praises?

In their hearts. DS, Van Nuys CA.

A: The prayer of devotion you are speaking of is called the *Laudes Divinae*, or the “Divine Praises,” and is usually sung or recited after Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Like many prayers and litanies of devotion they are updated periodically. If one looks to at the version that was approved of by Pope Leo XIII (2 February 1897) there is no mention of the Lord the Holy Ghost at all. At some point He was added as the “Comforter” and then that was eventually modified to “Paraclete.” By the way, the word Paraclete comes from the Greek παράκλητος [parákletos] and means one who consoles or comforts. Another point of note is that the original purpose of this prayer was to combat blasphemy, a good intention for us all to have again.

If you have a question, please feel free to send them via mail or e-mail (info@stfrancisoratory.org).



¹ This actually makes forty-six days, but since we do not fast or abstain on



**Our Lady of Lourdes
(11th February):
Pray for us!**



PRAYER REQUESTS

YOUR continued prayers are requested for the sick, especially Mr. Alfredo (Freddy) Cortes, Mr. Alfred Smith, Mr. & Mrs. William Schiermeyer, Mrs. Denise Huizenga, Mr. John Owen, and Mrs. Maria Gomez. Please also remember in your prayers the souls of those who have died, especially for Msgr. Robert McKenna, O.P.†, and Miss Kristie Tysdal†. If you know of someone unable to attend Holy Mass due to sickness, please be sure to let one of the priests know so they can arrange for a sick call.



the six Sundays of Lent, they are not counted among the penitential days.

THE LENTEN OBSERVANCE

A practical guide for those who take serious their obligations during the Holy Season of Lent

MANY of the faithful find the sacrifices and obligations of the Lenten Season confusing and burdensome; even those who remain faithful to Holy Tradition. This unfortunate and unnecessary attitude should be tackled by zealous Pastors everywhere, and the sublime Mysteries and bountiful graces fully explicated so that all the faithful can unite themselves intimately with the sufferings and supreme Sacrifice of Our Heavenly King. The forty days of Lent, intended to commemorate the forty days Our Blessed Lord spent fasting in the desert, begin on **Ash Wednesday** and last until **Holy Saturday**¹. The last two weeks of Lent are called, respectively, *Passion Week* and *Holy Week*. During these two weeks the Church, in her liturgy especially, follows the end of Our Lord’s mortal life very closely.

The faithful are expected to refrain from worldly amusements and distractions during this solemn season, and so for us modern Catholics it would not be unreasonable to refrain from television time and the watching of movies and other amusements such as “texting”,

unnecessary telephone conversations, computer time (including e-mails and “on-line” time), video games, frivolous reading, excessive music listening, and needless shopping. Now these things are suggestions (*strong suggestions*), and *not* obligatory – but every Catholic who is serious about his faith and the salvation of his soul, should take to heart the seriousness of these recommendations.

Also important are the *Ember Days* of Lent. The Ember Days (Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) are cherished by the Western Church and are very ancient. Four times a year (Advent, Lent, Pentecost and month of September) the Church devotes these days to prayer and penance. The readings and Mass parts of the Ember days of Lent are especially focused on prayer, penance and sacrifice. On these days, even outside of Lent, the faithful are bound, under pain of mortal sin, to abstain from meat.

The current Laws of Fast and Abstinence (for the United States) are absolutely binding (unless lawfully excused or dispensed) for *all* the faithful. All baptized Catholics, seven years of age or older, are bound to **abstain**. The two types of abstinence are **complete** and **partial**. *Complete abstinence* forbids the eating of meat, and soup or gravy made with or from meat¹, is required all Fridays throughout the year, Ash Wednesday, Holy Saturday, the Vigil of All

Saints, the Vigil of the Immaculate Conception, and the Vigil of Christmas. *Partial Abstinence*, which permits meat, and soup or gravy made from meat, to be eaten *only* at the main meal, is required on Ember Wednesday and Ember Saturday and the Vigil of Pentecost.

The laws of **Fasting** are for all baptized Catholics, from ages 21 through 59, inclusive. The days of fast are the weekdays of Lent, the Ember days and the Vigils of Pentecost, the Immaculate Conception and Christmas. On the days of fast only one full meal is allowed (with meat, except on Fridays) with two smaller *meatless* meals, which together do not equal one full meal. The eating of food or snacks between meals is forbidden; however the drinking of liquids, including milk and juice, are allowed.

For reasons of health one may seek the reduction or even dispensation from the fast from one’s Confessor. However, one should never simply dispense one’s self from these obligations; and should one be lawfully dispensed from these obligations, he should strive to find another type of *approved* penance that can be satisfactory to Almighty God.

Please remember that there is no obligation to fast or abstain on Holy Days of Obligation, *even* when they fall on a Friday. The Church commands us to fast and to abstain in order that we focus our minds and bodies towards God, to make satisfaction for

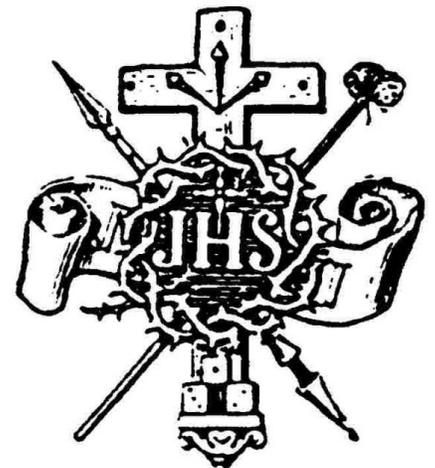
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sin, and to control and mortify our flesh. As Saint Paul reminds us, *I chastise my body and bring it into subjection lest perhaps after preaching to others I myself should be rejected* (1 Corinthians 9:27)

When we meditate upon the sufferings of Our Lord, and offer that in union with our fast and abstinence, we offer true contrition for our past sins. And when we couple these penances and sacrifices with good and pious works, we are examples to many of the truth and goodness of Our Lord and King Jesus Christ.

We must also be on guard not to carry these penances to excess, which may cause injury to our body; to cause purposeful injury to our bodies is a sin against the commandments, and does not please God at all.

We hope that this brief explanation of the Lenten observance answers your questions, and will aid you in making your Lent a meaningful and holy exercise.



¹ “Meat” means the flesh from all animals, except seafood. For further

clarification one may inquire of one’s Pastor.



FIRST FRIDAY AND FIRST SATURDAY

OUR First Friday and First Saturday devotions will be on the 5th and 6th of February. First Friday Mass is at 7:00 p.m., followed by Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament; First Saturday will be at 8:00 a.m., followed by the Devotions to the Immaculate Heart.

SPECIAL PRAYER REQUEST

WE are asking all the faithful to petition S. Joseph for his especial support and favour as we seek to purchase a home that will serve as a permanent home for our Mission, as well as a place for the clergy to live and form other men as future priests and religious.

Because commercial real estate is so very expensive we really are “throwing” money away with a commercial lease.

We will be looking for a house that can accommodate the faithful and have ample parking: ideally we would like a home that is easily accessed from the 405

Freeway as most of our faithful travel that route.

MASS GUILD

Holy Mass is offered on the First Saturday of every month for all Friends and benefactors of **SAINT FRANCIS ORATORY CHAPEL**. Your generous donation (one time *or* monthly) enables you to be remembered upon the Altars of the Society, where *only* the traditional Latin Mass is offered, as codified and canonized by His Holiness, Saint Pope Pius V, *perpetually* approved of.

We would like to remind those who send Mass requests to **PLEASE** include the name of the person and/or intention with your stipend. Mass Cards will be sent to concerned parties upon request. Thank you and God bless you!



Sunday Mass Time:

10:00 am – Parochial Mass
with Homily

Daily Mass Times:

Tuesday through Saturday
8:00 am

First Friday 7:00 pm

Confessions one half of an hour before Holy Mass

16826 Saticoy Street

Entrance and Parking around back

Van Nuys, CA 91406-2776

(818) 786-2540

e-mail:

info@stfrancisoratory.org

Be sure to visit our web site at:

www.stfrancisoratory.org

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✿ **Saint Francis Chapel** is staffed by the **Priestly Society of Christ the King (SSCR)**; properly trained and ordained Roman Catholic Priests who are faithful to the teachings and disciplines of the Roman Catholic Church. Saint Francis is not affiliated with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Our Holy Fathers, the Popes, most especially Saint Pope Pius V in His infallible decree *Quo Primum*, have given their permission in perpetuity to offer the Traditional Latin Mass (*Missal of S. Pope Pius V* and rubrics of *S. Pope Pius X*).

