

SAINT FRANCIS EXCHANGE

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

MARCH 2020 – LENTENTIDE

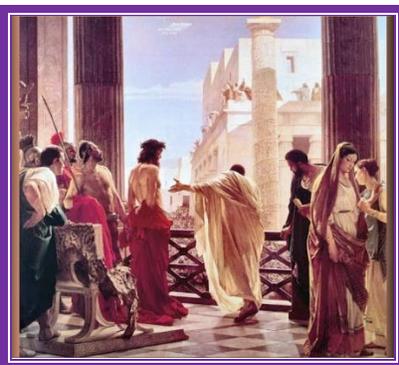
LETTER FROM THE MONSIGNOR

DESPISED, and the most abject of men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. – *Isaia 53:3 – 5*

HOLY LENT is now upon us, and as Catholics faithful to Holy Tradition we must take our Lenten Observance quite seriously. For over two decades I have encouraged the faithful to increase their Lenten penances and devotions in order to convert themselves; for it is only by converting ourselves we can aid in converting the world. This interior conversion that leads to external conversion is best accomplished by prayer and the pious practices known as **Spiritual Exercises**. Long found in the Religious Houses and Seminaries of the Church, many saints recommended such holy spiritual work for the layman as well. Also known as **Retreats**, these exercises varied from Order to Order, however the 16th century saint **Ignatius**

of **Loyola** composed a more organised formula to them.

In his encyclical *Mens Nostra* (20 December 1929), Pope Pius XI teaches us that: *God is all that is learnt, the way by which we are directed, all that whereby the knowledge of the supreme truth is attained (S. Basil, De Laude Solitariae Vitae). From all this it clearly appears that the Spiritual Exercises avail both to perfect the natural powers of man; and further, and more specially, to form the supernatural or Christian man.*



The image above shows us Pilate calling to the crowd, *Ecce Homo*, behold the Man (S. John 19:5). We must remember that our every action bespeaks of Christ to the world, and therefore we must be sure that our every action is holy, good and encouraging. This is best obtained by making use of the Lenten practice of *Prayer, Penance and Sacrifice*. This *dying to one's self* is extolled by Our Lord when He teach us: *Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal*

(S. John 12: 24–25). S. Thomas Aquinas teaches us on the *usefulness of the Passion; it is as though the Gospel said, Unless the grain fall to the earth through the humiliations of the Passion, no useful result will follow*. This is the correct understanding of Our Lord's words. We must *lose* ourselves in order to properly *find* ourselves. As the Apostle teaches us: *If then any be in Christ a new creature, the old things are passed away, behold all things are made new* (II Corinthians 5:17).

It is my prayer for you all this Lententide that you grow close to Christ Crucified; remain with Our Lady and the Beloved Disciple at the foot of the Cross; do not divert your gaze for even a moment. I only ask that in return you pray for me, and all Catholic clergy, to remain faithful and fervent.

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 King,

Monsignor ✠ Thomas JF Sebastian



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Monsignor,
How can I, and others, grow in Acts of Penance, Reparation, and Charity?

R.S., GA

A: What a wonderful question as we enter Holy Lent! As stated in my *Lenten Observance* (see in this edition), "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"

By focusing on Christ rather than ourselves and by denying ourselves the comforts and pleasures of this world we gain a true insight into what is proper, well-ordered and good. S. Paul, writing to the church in Rome reminds us that *by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned* (Romans 5:12). The only way to overcome this death is to conform one's self to Our Blessed Lord, Who being God, still offered prayer, penance and charity as an example for us of how to live in His grace: *For if by one man's offence death reigned through one; much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift, and of justice, shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ (ibid.)*.

Suffer and do penance with love, patience and joy: *But the fruit of the Spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity* (Galatians 5:22).

N.B.: There was a curious comment in last month's *Answer* concerning the Angels. Someone mistakenly thought that the Archangels are *lower* in the Heavenly Hierarchy. This is a dangerous association with human hierarchy. The Angles are distinct spiritual beings with distinct activities, they are not *higher or lower* than each other. Why would a "lower angel" guard Eden (*cf.* Genesis 3:24) or announce the coming of the Saviour (*cf.* S. Luke 1:26) or conquer Satan and his fallen angels (*cf.* Apocalypse 12:7-9)?

If you have a question, please feel free to e-mail:

info@stfrancisoratory.org

PRAYER REQUESTS

YOUR prayers are requested for the sick, especially Mr. McCanna Anthony Sinise, Miss Lauren Howard, Mr. Paul Howard, Miss Rhonda Roeszler, Mr. John Owen, and Mrs. Maria Gomez. Please also remember in your prayers the souls of those who have died, especially Mr. Frank Calderon and Mr. Alfred J. Smith. *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.*

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HOW TO DONATE AND SEND MASS STIPENDS

WE have had some recent inquiries on-line about how to donate or send Mass stipends. You can always send your donation to our Post Office Box:

St. Francis of Assisi
PO Box 8469
Van Nuys, CA 91409-8469

You can also donate on line with the PayPal link on our webpage:



The normal stipend for a Mass Intention is \$20.00. Please be sure to include the person's name (w/Mr., Mrs. or Miss) and if they are living or deceased. Also, be sure to indicate if you wish a Mass Card to be sent to that person or their family.

Your continued support is appreciated and quite needed to continue our mission of offer the true and traditional Latin Mass of the Holy Catholic Church. The true Mass and Faith are ours to protect, defend and support!



HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION FOR 2020

21 May 2020

Ascension Thursday

15 August 2020 (Saturday)

Assumption of the BVM

1 November (Sunday)

All Saints Day

8 December 2020 (Tuesday)

Immaculate Conception of the BVM

25 December 2020 (Friday)

Christmas

SUNDAYS OF MARCH: THE CATHOLIC HAND MISSAL

In order to assist the faithful following Holy Mass with their hand missals here are the Sunday Masses for **March**:

1 March 2020:

First Sunday in Lent: commemoration of the *Suffrage of the Saints* and *For the Living and the Dead* at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion.

8 March 2020

Second Sunday in Lent: commemoration of S. John of God at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion.

15 March 2020

Third Sunday in Lent: commemoration of the *Suffrage of the Saints* and *For the Living and the Dead* at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion.

22 March 2020

Fourth Sunday in Lent: commemoration of the *Suffrage of the Saints* and *For the Living and the Dead* at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion.

29 March 2020

Passion Sunday in Lent: commemoration of the *Against*

the Persecutors of the Church at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion.

To correctly participate at Holy Mass one *silently* unites his prayers with those of the Church through pious and attentive meditation of the prayers and reading of Holy Mass.

If you are unsure how to correctly set your hand missal arrive early for Holy Mass and ask the Monsignor to assist you. It is also important to become familiar with the *Ordinary of the Mass*, those parts that never change, i.e.: Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Sanctus, Benedictus, and the Agnus Dei. And of course the Canon of the Mass, and the *Propers of the Mass*, those which vary according to the feasts of the day, i.e., Introit, Collect(s) (after the Gloria or Dominus Vobiscum), Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia, Tract or Sequence, Gospel, Secret, Communion Verse and Post Communion. On many feasts or days there are *Commemorations* (additional prayers) at the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion. The careful attention to these prayers and readings will help one enter into a deeper spiritual relationship with the Holy Liturgy, the Saints and Mysteries of God.

CATECHISM FOR ALL

OUR monthly lecture for March will be on the **Ceremonies and Rites of Holy Mass – Part II**; please submit your questions to:

info@stfrancisoratory.org

If you have not yet signed up for the lecture series you may do so at any time. **If**

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you are interested please send
an email to:

info@stfrancisoratory.org

LENTEN READING RECOMMENDATIONS

These are some wonderful books for your Lenten Reading, all available on line:

- ❖ *The Imitation of Christ*
by Thomas á Kempis
- ❖ *On the Passion of Christ*
by Thomas á Kempis
- ❖ *Sermons of S. Francis de Sales for Lent*
- ❖ *Cross and Crown*
by Fr. Robert Mader

THE LENTEN OBSERVANCE

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** (This actually makes forty-six days, but since we do not fast or abstain on the six Sundays of Lent, they are not counted among the penitential

days). 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 meat ("Meat" means the flesh from all animals, except seafood. For further clarification one may inquire of one's Pastor), 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

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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 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.



**Sunday Mass Time:
9:00 am – Parochial Mass
with Sermon**

Confessions one half of an hour before Holy Mass

**Gates, Kingsley & Gates
Praiswater Mortuary**

located at

**6909 Canoga Ave, Canoga
Park, CA 91303**

*(between Sherman Way and
Vanowen).*

(818) 786-2540

e-mail: info@stfrancisoratory.org

Be sure to visit our web site at:

www.stfrancisoratory.org

**N.B.: Our new Mailing Address
is:**

**Post Office Box 8469
Van Nuys, CA 91409-8469**

✿ 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*).

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!



Saint Francis Exchange RECOMMENDED WEBSITES:

www.traditio.com

www.traditioninaction.com

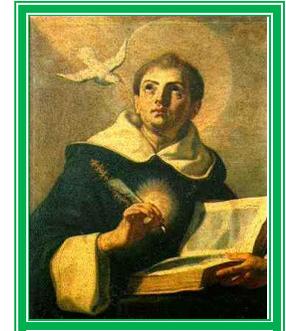
www.remnantnewspaper.com

www.traditionalmass.org

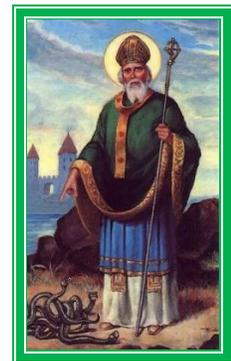
N.B.: Recommendation of a website is for information, and does not constitute association with or full agreement of opinions or positions.



*S. Joseph (19 March):
Pray for us!*



*S. Thomas Aquinas (7 March):
Pray for us!*



*S. Patrick (17 March):
Pray for us!*