

PAX – WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE
LENT, 2019

The Lenten Journey is not about “giving up things”, it is about be-coming more than we are. The Lenten Journey is a spiritual journey, given to us each year as a time of renewal. Let us think about be-coming more than we are, not about depriving ourselves of “things”. When we limit the Lenten Journey to a time of deprivation, we lose the whole meaning of the Season. On the other hand, if giving up something helps us to become a better person, more Christian, more peaceful, gentle and so on, then that deprivation is positive.

SECTION ONE: READING AND REFLECTION

I have chosen the theme: “Fast from and feast on.” I found it on a card left in our Monastic Library by Sr. Mellitus, who died in February 2018. She was Librarian for a number of years. The card simply says: “From a Benedictine website”.

Numerous kinds of fasting are spelt out here. They are all more difficult to do than fasting from food:

- Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them.
- Fast from emphasis on differences; feast on the unity of life.
- Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.
- Fast from words that pollute; feast on words that purify.
- Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
- Fast from anger; feast on patience.
- Fast from worry; feast on Divine Providence.
- Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.
- Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
- Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.
- Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.
- Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.
- Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.
- Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.
- Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer than undergirds.

Resist the urge to dive in and take on every “Fast from...” That is not the way. In fact we will lose the way this Lent if we take on every “fast from...”

Instead take one only, - but one in which you can see yourself as in a mirror. Each one of us will know what is right for us this Lent.

For many Catholics, discouragement is the big one at the moment. It is hard to “feast on hope”, as we look around us at the aftermath and lingering destruction of the sexual abuse scandal.

The last “fast from” is helpful for monastics who hold authority, and the problems that go with authority.

A very interesting “fast from” is the third one. I have never seen that written before, and yet, we can all indulge in thoughts of illness, especially as we age. Some of us have ill-health associated with ageing. We feel sorry for

ourselves. We may even moan and groan about it. Yes, number three is helpful: “Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.”

SECTION TWO: FURTHER READING AND REFLECTION

Lent is the time when we choose a suitable book for reading and reflection. The following books are available in our shop:

By Joan Chittister -

- “Becoming Fully Human – the Greatest Glory of God” (6 copies), \$26.57
- “Between the Dark and the Daylight – “Embracing the Contradictions of Life” (8 copies) \$ 28:25
- “Gift of Years – Growing Older Gracefully” (8 copies) \$20.55
- “The Radical Christian Life – A Year with St. Benedict” (7 copies) \$34.16

By Michael Casey:

- “Grace on the Journey to God” (9 copies) \$24.95
- “Strangers To the City – Reflections on the Beliefs and Values of the Rule of Saint Benedict” (7 copies) \$23.00

By Henri Nouwen:

- “Discernment – Reading The Signs of Daily Life” (5 copies) \$40.15
- “The Inner Voice of Love – A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom” (5 copies) \$40.15

By Ronald Rolheiser:

- “Bruised And Wounded – Struggling to Understand Suicide” (7 copies) \$15.20
- “Wrestling with God – Finding Hope and Meaning in our Daily Struggles to be Human” (7 copies) \$31.86

Or: you may have a book that you haven’t read for a long time, and would like to re-visit.

We also suggest that you pray with the liturgy readings for each weekend. These are on our website from every week. There is a little background to each reading, and a shared response to each reading.

One other currently relevant topic is “clericalism”. Fr. John Crothers’ book, “The Clergy Club”, is available for sale in our shop. (\$34.95). Peter Maher, Sydney priest and editor of “The Swag”, the National Council of Priests quarterly magazine, says of the book: “This book is equally important for Catholic laity and clergy. Crothers argues that the future lies in clergy and laity collaborating in shaping the future of the church with mutual respect, dialogue and deep listening.”

SECTION THREE: ABOUT THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

Chapter Four of the Rule is where we need to be this Lent.

The following verses of chapter four link directly with one of the “fast from...” verses at the beginning:

Verses 1, 7, 8, 9, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 39, 40, 41, 51, 52, 74.

When you are doing *Lectio Divina* each day, take one of these verses. Just one – even one per week, and ponder on the exhortation of each verse.

Verse 20 of Chapter four tells us: “Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way.”

In “The Rule of St. Benedict, Insights for the Ages”, Sr. Joan Chittister comments: “The end of Benedictine spirituality is to develop a transparent personality. Dissimulating, half answers, vindictive attitudes, a false presentation of self are all barbs in the soul of the monastic.” (page 51)

If we claim to be monastics, then that’s what we have to be: Monastics!

SECTION FOUR: COMMUNITY HISTORY

On February 11, following a community discernment led by Br Ian Cribb SJ, the community faced the election of a new Abbess. On the fourth ballot, Sr. Hilda Scott was elected.

The Prioresses and Abbesses throughout history have been:

Mother **Walburge Wallis** (1864-1902)

Mother **Ignatius Harnett** (1902-1915)

Mother **Mary Joseph Brady** (1915-1947).

Mother **Mildred Potts** (1947-1968)

Mother **Placid Wilson** (1968-1980)

Mother **Benedicta Philips**, elected Prioress in 1980. The Monastery was raised to the status of an Abbey in 1982, and there was another election for an Abbess on November 10, 1982. Mother Benedicta Philips was elected again, and became the first Abbess in the community’s history. She was abbess from 1982 until her sudden death in 2006.

Mother **Mary Barnes** was elected second abbess of the community on November 21, 2006. She was abbess until February 10, 2019.

Bishop Brian Mascord presided over the election on Feb . 11, 2019. He was assisted by Fr. Paul Gurr, Chaplain of the Jamberoo community.

SECTION FIVE: LITURGY

OUR LITURGICAL CALENDAR IS AS FOLLOWS:

March 6: Ash Wednesday

March 10: First Sunday of Lent.

March 17: Second Sunday of Lent.

March 18: St. Patrick (transferred from Sunday)

March 19: St. Joseph

March 21: The Passing of St. Benedict

March 24: Third Sunday of Lent.

March 25: Annunciation of the Lord.
March 31: Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday).
April 7: Fifth Sunday of Lent.
April 14: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord)
HOLY WEEK
April 18: Holy Thursday
April 19: Good Friday
April 20: Holy Saturday.
April 21: Easter Sunday
April 21-28: Octave of Easter.

PALM SUNDAY begins holy week, the most solemn week of the year.

The Sacred Paschal Triduum begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening.

THE SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM CONSISTS OF THREE DAYS: Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

It begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper, and finishes with the Office of Compline on Easter Sunday night.

SECTION SIX: YOUR COMMUNITY

We have been notified of the death of Oblate Bill (Benedict) Price, on December 26, 2018. Bill was one of the first Oblates to make a commitment after we moved to Jamberoo. Bill's daughter has notified us through our Facebook page. Please pray for Bill, his daughter and family.

Another death which I have been asked to include with this "Pax" is that of Arthur Comber. Arthur has been our Optometrist since we moved here, and in the beginning did not charge for consultation, only for the glasses we needed. He was a support person, as we settled here in Jamberoo. We are grateful to Arthur. Please pray for Arthur's wife Joan, and for their children.

Anniversaries of Oblation:

MARCH

March 5 - Donn (Gregory) Corcoran
March 7 - Nazin (Hildegard) Atalay
March 8 - Julie (Frances) Redican
March 15 - Ian (Godric) Thomas
March 16 - June (Benedicta) Jenkins
March 19 - Bernard Quinn
March 20 -Fr. John (Ignatius) Anderson
March 21 -Cecilia (Teresa Thomas) Larkin, and Carol (Mary of the Cross) Xuereb
March 25 - Elizabeth (Mary) Hildegard Muntz, Jennifer (Ancilla) Shirvington and Mark (Maurus) Hamilton
March 29 - Elizabeth (Beth) Teresa Montgomery and Maria (Matilda) Curtis

APRIL

April 16 - Helen (Seraphim) Shorter

April 19 - Margaret (Thomas More) Whetham & Ewa Maria (Teresa)
Komorowska

Solemn Profession Anniversary:

2 March: Sr. Mechtild Crawford

Feast days during Lent. Happy feast day to:

5 March (St Gregory) - Donn Gregory Corcoran

9 March (St Frances of Rome) - Maureen Frances Williamson, Catherine Frances Turek, Isabel Frances Vicary, Kevin Francis Vicary, Helena Frances O'Neill, Elizabeth Frances Fahey, Denise Frances Hill, Julie Frances Redican, Christine Frances Angus.

14 March (St Matilda) Maria Matilda Curtis, and Kay Matilda Myers.

17 March (St Patrick) Rev. Ian Patrick Crooks

25 March (The Annunciation of the Lord) Mary (of the Annunciation) Wyatt, Sr. Ancilla, Jenny Ancilla Shirvington and Bernadette Mary Maher.

21 April (St Anselm) - Tony Anselm Tarleton, Alfred Anselm Breznik, Robert Anselm Cashman, Robert, Anselm van Oort, and Kate Anselm Trevenen.

Necrology

MARCH

07 – Oblate Bernie Daniel Fitzgerald

09 – Sr. Marcy Cecily Bourke

11 - Sr. Mary Jones

16 – Most Rev. John Bede Polding O.S.B.

17 – Oblate Peter Bernard Smith

18 – Sr. Margaret Gallagher

20 – Sr. Mechtilde O'Grady

21 – Oblate Sidney Stephen Long

21 - Sr. Maria McKenzie

22 – Sr. Bridget Kelly

25 – Sr. Marguerite Burke

26 – Sr. Mary Clare Gabriel

28 – Mother Mary Magdalen le Clerc, Founding Mother.

APRIL

03 – Sr. Mary Hildegard Doyle

07 – Sr. Mary Monica Hardie

10 – Sr. Mary Aelred Bradshaw

17 - Sr. Mary Editha Thompson (1983)

23 - Mother M. Ignatius Harnett (1915)

27 - Sr. M. Magdalene Parkinson (1900)

28 - Sr. M. Placida Burrows (1859)

SECTION SEVEN: SAINTS

St. John Climacus has wisdom to offer on the Gossiping Tongue: *Talkativeness is a proof of ignorance, the door to scandal-mongering, the helpmeet of falsehood. It destroys the spirit of penance, gives rise to boredom, predisposes to lethargy, destroys recollection, distracts attention...and cuts off prayer. Silence on the other hand is the mother of prayer. It frees the prisoner; it guards the divine flame.*

“Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.”


SECTION EIGHT: FOR REFLECTION

From Forty Texts on Sobriety, by Philotheus of Sinai: *Nothing is more ruinous than talkativeness and more harmful than an uncontrolled tongue; and nothing is more destructive and disorganizing to the treasure of the soul. For whatever we succeed in building in ourselves every day is destroyed by much talking, and what we collect together with great labour our soul dissipates again through this disease of the tongue. What can be worse than an uncontrolled tongue?* (Text No. 5, as in “Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart”, translated from the Russian Text, ‘Dobrotolubiye’ by E. Kadloubovsky and G.E.H. Palmer).

PS Oblates of Jamberoo Abbey Facebook Page

Many of you already follow our Facebook page each day. It always wonderful to read your responses and reflections. We thank you for your support and for sharing our page with others.

Now, we also want to let you know that there is a Jamberoo Abbey Oblate page you might want to also follow. It has been started by Oblate Eva Leppard, who wrote to us some weeks back with this message –

Hi there! I was wondering if you think there would be an interest in an Oblate facebook group? I would love to connect with other oblates but just don't have a way to do so - and facebook is so fabulous for keeping in touch! I'd be happy to run it if people think that this would be a good idea  Blessings, Eva

Abbess Mary was still our abbess when this request came through and was thrilled with the idea as she had long wanted to have a forum where Oblates could connect and contribute ideas and reflections. So, Eva has set up the page which is called Oblates of Jamberoo Abbey. Eva has given us this link and do hope you will join her! Thanks Eva...onwards and upwards!

Ok, ready for some friends to join me



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/421003968657055/>