

The Witness

Mount Saint Francis Cursillo Center
Mount Saint Francis, Indiana 47146



You are my witnesses, says the Lord, my servants whom I have chosen [Isaiah 43:10]

What Lent Means to Me

By Howard Gettelfinger

As Catholic Christians, we approach the Lenten Season similarly. Yet, because we are individuals, our method may differ in certain aspects. As youngsters in St. Michael School, Sister Mary Philip encouraged us to give up something that was dear to us; the most popular of which was candy. Such penance was to make us more aware of the "Original Lent," thru which Jesus suffered nearly 2000 years ago. What greater gift could he have given us than to relinquish his earthly life on the cross, so that we might live closer to him and his Heavenly Father?

Growing into adulthood, we followed the Church Laws on fasting and abstinence. As a senior citizen – aka, an old man - I am now exempted from the more stringent rules. I do abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and each Friday, along with other pleasures of life during the forty days of preparation. I will be quick to admit, however, that I do selfishly use Lent as a crutch. Actually, by various means of fast and abstinence I manage to drop a few pounds during this religious season; much of which is accomplished by deprivation of the proverbial "sweet tooth."

With maturation – i.e., growing old - I view Lent differently. In preparing for the greatest of the Church-Year's Celebrations (Easter Sunday - when Jesus conquered earthly death), I make a special effort to increase my prayer time, the frequency of attending Holy Mass, and receiving Holy Eucharist. I also find Lent to be a good time to kick up the reading of Holy Scripture as well as other Catholic Publications.

We are blessed with much spiritual literature furnished by our local parishes; The Aquinas Center, in Clarksville, IN, and other religious organizations. One of my favorite publications is The "Little Black Book" with six-minute, daily meditations for Lent; "The Little White Book", which continues the devotions from Easter to Pentecost; and "The Little Blue Book," with daily readings during Advent. These publications are distributed by the Diocese of Saginaw, MI, and can be found in many of the local parish's reading racks.

The manner in which we spend Lent is optional. What is important is that we do spend Lent in a spiritual manner so as to keep us more attuned to the sufferings and death that Jesus experienced at the tender age of thirty-three, way before the normal span of life, even in the early days of civilization. Doing so can only intensify the joy of our celebrating Christ's rising from the tomb that glorious Easter morning, nearly 2000 years ago.

Drawing Closer to God Through Music

By Barbara Morris

Lent is a time to step back from my busy life and make a conscience effort to draw closer to God and reflect on His love for me. One of the ways I do this is through prayer. Music is an important part of my prayer life.

When He was on the Cross, I was on His Mind –

This song always comes to mind during the season of Lent. As I reflect on the words, I feel so blessed by what Jesus did for me. Dying on the cross, freely giving up His life for me, so that I can have Eternal life with Him.

Refrain: He knew me, yet He loved me He who's Glory makes the Heaven shine. So Unworthy of such mercy When He was on the cross, I was on His mind.

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The Witness Goes Green

For pictures, archived articles, and the latest Cursillo news, check out what Steve Volpert is doing at our website — www.cursillo.org/mtstfrancis. Then send your email address to cursillo_msf@insightbb.com to get meeting reminders and real-time updates.

You can also receive the Witness electronically by submitting your email address to: cursillo_msf@insightbb.com.

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I can't earn His love and grace. It's given to me freely. I can never be worthy of the sacrifice that God gave to me. This unselfish act is a free gift to us all, waiting to be opened.

Another favorite song of mine is, **He Touched Me.**

He touched me, Oh He touched me. And oh the joy that floods my soul. Something happened and now I know, He touched me and made me whole.

I'll never forget the day God touched me. I was on a parish retreat, seeking more meaning in my life. God revealed His love to me through His word. It was as if a light was turned on and I was overwhelmed with His love for me. I will always remember that special day when I was touched by God. He came into my heart and changed my life forever, giving me a joy and peace that this world cannot provide.

*God has chosen me, God has chosen me,
to bring good news to the poor.
God has chosen me, God has chosen me,
to bring new sight to those searching for light
God has chosen me, chosen me.*

What??? God has chosen little old shy me?

Wow! What an awesome and scary task. However, Cursillo has taught me I'm not alone. Through grouping and Ultreya I can find the courage and desire to go out and share God's love with people in my everyday life, not only through my words, but most importantly through my action.

This Lent, I am so thankful for the love that God has for me and what He did for me by dying on the cross. I know that I can always count on Him not only in the joyful times of life, but in my struggles.

May God bless each of you this Lenten season, as you draw closer to Him.



How Can I Decrease so He Can Increase?

By: Sister Karen Byerley, OSB

Here we are again living the Lenten season. It always seems incongruent that we celebrate this season of "dying to self" at a time of the year when the earth is coming to new life. I guess it all depends on how you look at Lent and what it is God calls you to. If my mind-set still thinks of Lent as that time when the church asks us to give-up stuff and sacrifice all the things I truly like then I guess it seems like the worse part of dying. We tend to forget that in dying we are born to something even "more". Spring only happens because first something died, changed, became more. Whether it means the seed dies, the tree lays bare or the field sets dormant for months, it is what has to happen for the NEW to be.

So, I look at Lent with a different set of eyes. I see Lent as an opportunity not to give up but to become. I get six special weeks in the Church life to see who it is God calls me to be. I am presented the gift of time to be, to allow God to work through me and with me. It is a concentrated period when God says to me, "You are mine. Be the You I created you to be." I am reminded that Jesus does not ask for holocausts and sin-offerings but for my open heart. God does not want me to give up just for the sake of giving up. If I refrain from something during Lent it is because God wants something else.

What is it that God wants? *Me, My Time, My Heart, My Love, My Presence* before God. I am reminded of the Rich Young Man who was challenged to gift Jesus with just a bit more than what is required but can't. Will I be able to accept God's challenge this Lent to spend more time with God, to sit in his presence, to allow God to grow in me, to become even more the God child I was created to be?

Lent becomes whatever I make it. Am I going to be one who dies to self in order to live for Christ? I pray I can and I pray you can. Together we continue to grow in the Kingdom and for the Kingdom.

OBEDIENCE, AND THE PUPPY AT THE RIVER

By Cynthia Shultz

The Following Cursillistas Need Your Prayers

The lost I will seek out,
the strayed I will bring
back, the injured I will
bind up,
the sick I will heal
Ezekiel 34:16

The Franciscan
Friars

Brother Ambrose

Alan Barker

Red Baumann

Bill & Sharon Beck

Mary Beeler

Janie Boggs Family

Ron Byerley & Family

Joe Camarata

Fr. Mike Hilderbrand

Kaye Hobbs

O.J. Ignacio

Patty Lockett

Bob & Irene Naville

Jerry Reising & Family

Charlie & Mary Ann

Sanders

Phyllis Schickel &

Family

Rita Schueler & Family

Jim & Mary Ann Smith
& Family

Marie Smith

The MSF Cursillo

Community

Jeanette Voyles

Jack & Debbie West

Annette White

*Please help keep our
prayer list updated.
Contact Sr. Karen at
812-949-3189 or send
an email to:
karenbyerley
@att.net*

It had been a stressful day. I NEEDED my walk along the river with my canine buddy, Promise. With leash in hand, my Golden retriever and I headed out on the path above the water. The view was breathtaking: the sun was glistening on the water flanked by hills that rose up to meet the heavens. The temperature was ideal. Just as I was downloading my brain, an old white car slowed down on the road nearby. A man was yelling at me from behind closed windows. It was a little unsettling so I quickened my step. The man followed and proceeded to get out of his car and call out: "DO YOU WANT MY DOG???"

I saw the desperation in his face, AND the cute bundle of fur under his arm: a black and tan Cockapoo puppy sporting a dark blue collar and leash.

I didn't have time to think but knew my answer: "YES!" I answered. As the man handed the pup to me, he volunteered a piece of information: "My wife had a stroke," he said with sadness. And then he was gone.

I was in a state of shock as I looked down at this adorable 13-week-old life, probably a beloved pet until life threw his family a curve ball. Now, he was an orphan. Still, I wasn't in the market for a puppy. With two 100-pound dogs who keep me busy, plus two cats and a large family, I knew I wouldn't have the time to care for the little guy I named "Chance." Chance was fitting since he just found a second chance at happiness thanks to his owner who knew he could no longer care for him, and to God for putting me at the river at that moment.

Promise, Chance and I headed back to my car where I prayed along the way: "Dear Lord, I know the shelter has been closed for an hour, but please let my friends be there to take Chance."

As I drove the five-minutes to the shelter, Chance showered me with so many puppy kisses I had trouble steering the car. I felt so good about his future. Promise was relieved, I am sure, that he didn't have to share his home with a young, energetic kid.

I banged on the shelter door and kept praying that my friends would somehow be working late. They were! The door opened and so did their arms.

After cooing over Chance, they assured me he was highly adoptable. Later, after no one claimed Chance, he received his puppy shots and his forever home.

I always feel good about animals I can rescue and I always find lessons in my experiences, both animal and human-related. And this one? It was easy: When God calls us to do something we must drop everything and answer His call. Not a day later or in a minute. Right now! Obedience is what makes Him smile.

I know He was smiling at me that day on the river since I said yes right away to a situation without weighing the negatives. (That man and puppy needed help.) I know He was proud of me for not letting fear control my answer. And...I know He is smiling at me right now for sharing this valuable lesson with you.

Calendar Of Events

Pilgrim's Way 3rd Monday 7:00 PM

Ultreya 4th Monday 7:30 PM

4th Day Retreat, May 19 at 8:15 am—5:00 pm

4th Day Retreat: The Way, The Truth, The Life



When: May 19th from 8:15 - 5ish

Where: Mount Saint Francis Ultreya Room

How much: Cost is only \$20 per person (Includes lunch)

RSVP: Jim Smith at jims88@insightbb.com

or Joe Proctor at wjproctor@insightbb.com

This is needed for numbers for lunch.

Send payment to: Jim Smith 1112 Savannah Dr.

New Albany 47150 or give it to him at Ultreya or the day of.

Secretariat

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>E-MAIL</u>
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Wanted: Your witness articles

E-Mail your newsletter items to:
David.laurie91@gmail.com, or mail to:
 David & Laurie Slusser, 1229 Lafayette
 Drive, New Albany, IN 47150

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