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March 2010



# The Franciscan Legionnaire

Newsletter of the Friars Legion of St. Peter's Church in the Loop  
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## *Peace and Everything Good*

By Fr. Chuck Faso, OFM

[www.frchuckofm.org](http://www.frchuckofm.org)

The month of March brings the remembrances of Lent, the Feasts of St Patrick, St Joseph, Annunciation, and Palm Sunday. The season of Lent and the feasts we celebrate can transform us during these days of March.

On Ash Wednesday, thousands of people from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM entered the front doors of St Peter's to begin the season of Lent, to begin the journey to baptism and renewal of baptism at the Easter Vigil Service. Thousands participated in Masses in the Church and descended to the auditorium to receive the sign of the cross with ashes.



The words that call us to conversion are: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel" or "Remember, man/woman, that you are dust and unto dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19) These are sober words that are a wake-up call and an invitation to greater prayer, fasting, and almsgiving and sharing of ourselves.

As we receive and accept the ashes on our foreheads, we outwardly profess our guilt before God and our desire for inward conversion prompted by the hope that the Lord is kind and compassionate, patient and merciful

When I was pastor at St Peter's, I would ask the person kneeling for ashes in front of me: "Are you ready for Lent?" The responses were: "Yes!" "No, but I hope to be." Or "Are you ready, Father?" All are good responses and question. Ready or not, we all began the journey to Easter. Lent begins the one season that lasts thirteen weeks: Lent-Triduum-Easter. Lent lasts six weeks. The Triduum (Three Days) of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday and Easter. Then Easter breaks into seven weeks of Easter-ing – six weeks of fasting followed by seven weeks of feasting.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec 4, 1963 – the first of the sixteen documents of the Vatican Council II – stated that the two themes of Lent are Baptism and Penance, that is, preparing of the Catechumens for Baptism and for those already baptized, preparation for renewal of Baptismal vows; a time of conversion and repentance. Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful (already baptized) to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of dying and rising to a new quality of life with and in Christ.

What happened to "giving up" something for Lent? – giving up TV, chocolate, desserts, movies, etc. We need to remember the other side of giving up, namely: What are we doing positively in our lives? Another way to say this: What are we fasting from and feasting on?

Fast from gossip and feast on affirmation.  
 Fast from judging and feast on accepting.  
 Fast from lying and feast on telling the truth.  
 Fast from prejudice and feast on understanding.  
 Fast from fear and feast on courage.  
 Fast from doubt and feast on faith.  
 Fast from selfishness and feast on service.  
 Fast from news and feast on the Bible.  
 Fast from internet and feast on conversation.  
 Fast from TV and feast on family activity.  
 Fast from talking and feast on silence.  
 Fast from speaking and feast on listening.  
 Fast from.....

What fasting/feasting can you add to this list?

The word Lent is from the Anglo-Saxon word Lencten. This means Springtime. By praying, fasting, and sharing our things and selves, we will spring to new life and love, faith in and surrender to our loving God. Happy Lent-ing!

### INVICTUS

Recently, a friend of mine and I saw the movie that tells the inspiring true story of how Nelson Mandela (Morgan Freeman) joined forces with the captain (Matt Damon) of South Africa's rugby team. "His people needed a leader. He gave them a champion." Together they inspired the team to win the World Cup of rugby and by doing so they took a major step forward in ending prejudice and racism. The possibility of a united country began to emerge.



(Nelson Mandela)

Clint Eastwood directed this inspiring movie which is about the early struggle's of South Africa. Of course, the story is about all of us and our prejudices, racism, fears, angers, and hatreds. How did Nelson Mandela stir up the inspiration for both Blacks and White's? As shown in the movie, Mandela spent 27 years in prison on an island off the coast of South Africa. At one point he took the captain of the rugby team to the prison and to his tiny cell. The captain asked Mandela what was his strength and inspiration during those 27 years that empowered him to stay alive with purpose and spirit. The answer lie in a poem that Mandela recited every day in prison. He gave a copy of the poem to the captain Then he understood. The poem is named Invictus – a Latin word that means unconquerable. The English poet William Ernest Henley (1849-1902) wrote the poem as a statement of confidence that there is nothing outside of me that can cause my end.

“For my unconquerable soul!.. My head is bloody, but unbowed...The menace of the years finds, and shall find, me unafraid...I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul.”

Unconquerable – Unbowed – Unafraid!  
 Invictus! Nelson Mandela, now 91 years old, gained the strength each day during those 27 years in prison that prepared him to be president, a leader and champion for his people.

In Jesus the Christ, we too can be unconquerable, unbowed, unafraid! This is what we celebrate on Easter. These days of Lent are days of looking at what makes us weak, afraid, bowed to values of our culture. Jesus the Invictus empowers us to be free from what drags us down, to be hope-filled with vision and passion for a better life and world. Dying and Rising, going down and coming up, and declaring that through the grace of Baptism we too are Invictus. For further inspiration, see the movie Invictus and read the whole poem.

No Jesus- No Peace. Know Jesus - Know Peace



### **First Friday for SENIORS – new at St Peter’s**

Fr Paul Gallagher OFM of St Peter’s has begun a program for Seniors at St. Peter’s. Fr. Paul heads up the Young Adult Ministry. And now, he offers a program of prayer, input, reflection once a month during the mornings on the First Friday.

### **First Fridays for Seniors**

First Friday of Every Month  
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM  
St. Clare Auditorium  
\$5.00 (Scholarships available)

10:00 - Coffee & Social  
10:20 - Prayer  
10:30 - Speaker  
11:00 - Quite Reflection  
11:15 Listening  
11:30 Announcements

### **Future Topics:**

#### March 5

“Mourning and the Consolation of God”  
Fr. Mark Soelner, OFM

#### April 4th~Good Friday

No Gathering

#### May 7th

“How to Manage Worry”

Karin Mc Nicholas, MSW, LCSW

For further info, contact Fr. Paul Gallagher, OFM at his office: 312.628.1252

At St Peter’s, there is something for everyone. When I was pastor, I used to describe St Peter’s as: The Emergency Room for Hope and Healing in the Loop. And so it is still and always.

#### Did You Know?

...That every day at St Peter’s in the Loop of Chicago, at every mass offered in the Church, (seven masses each week day, two masses on Saturday, and four masses on Sunday), that the last Intercession of the Prayer of the Faithful is for the intentions and needs of all the members of the Friars Legion. You are prayed for daily.



St Peter’s opened its doors Sept 8, 1953

A giant crucifix by Latvian sculptor Arvid Strauss called "Christ of the Loop" fills the Gothic arch in the center of the main facade at the downtown Catholic St. Peter's Church operated by the Franciscans. The 18-foot, 26-ton Georgia pink marble sculpture was commissioned by the Franciscan Friars. In 1853, Diocesan Priests opened St Peter’s Church on Clark and Polk –a mile south of the present St Peter’s Church. The Franciscan Friars began service at St Peter’s in 1875 when so many German speaking Catholics began coming to the Church. We hope with your help to continue our ministry in the Loop to workers, travelers, and now the many people living in the Loop and to do so for years to come. Thank you.

## **Violence and Vengeance**

There has to be a way out of the stupidity of violence and vengeance! When both of us are blind, we both fall into the pit, as Jesus says. Vengeance seems so logical, but it doesn't really work. It doesn't advance human history, or finally our own agenda. It only delays and disguises the problem.

The wonder of the resurrection stories in the Gospels is that Jesus exhibits no vengeful attitude toward the authorities or his cowardly followers. He is not even judgmental toward them. Afterwards, his followers never call for any kind of holy war against those who killed their leader, which is almost unknown in world history. Something new has clearly transpired. This is not the common or expected story line. A new Spirit is abroad.

Even Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., said that they learned their nonviolence from Jesus, but most of us church people are still catching up with him. (Richard Rohr)

May this Lenten journey help us to catch up with Jesus. May our prayer and reading of the Bible help us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.



***Christ has no hands but our hands to do his work today - He has no feet but our feet to lead others in the way...***

***Christ has no tongue but our tongue to tell others how he died – He has no help but our help to bring them to his side.***

***We are the only Bible the careless world will read. – We are the sinner's gospel; we are the***

***scoffer's creed. – We are the Lord's last message, given in word and deed.***

***What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred? (Annie J. Flint)***

### ***APPLICATION FOR YEAR-LONG MEMORIAL CANDLE***

*(Please print, leaving a space between each word.)*

To be lit in honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Living\_\_\_\_\_ Deceased\_\_\_\_\_

Requested by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date candle is to be lit: Immediately\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Date\_\_\_\_\_

The offering for the Memorial Candle is \$150.00.

Please enclose a check for the full amount with this form.

### ***APPLICATION FOR PERPETUAL ENROLLMENT IN THE FRIARS LEGION***

*(Please print, leaving a space between each word.)*

Please Enroll:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

as a Perpetual Member of the Saint Peter's Friars Legion.

Living\_\_\_\_\_ Deceased\_\_\_\_\_

Your Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Individual, \$25.00\_\_\_\_\_ Family, \$100.00\_\_\_\_\_

*(Immediate family, parents and children)*