



The Franciscan Legionnaire

Newsletter of the Friars Legion of St. Peter's Church in the Loop

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May the Lord Give you Peace!

By Fr Chuck Faso, OFM (www.frchuckofm.org)

Christ of the Loop

The exterior of Saint Peter's Church in the Loop features a Crucifix of Jesus dying on the cross for us and for all people, everywhere and for all time. The Latvian sculptor Arvid Strauss sculpted this three-story, 26-ton crucifix from Georgia pink marble. Many people stop to take a closer look at this work of art and to photograph the crucifix from various angles as the sun light on the façade of St Peter's changes continuously throughout the day.



This image of Jesus dying on the cross in many ways proclaims loudly and clearly the very reason we Friars are here in the Loop of Chicago: To proclaim the love, mercy and forgiveness of Jesus who died for us on the Cross, who rose from the tomb and lives in our midst this day and every day.

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9. Some 35,000 people, will walk beneath this Crucified Christ of the Loop, and will enter the doors of St Peter's from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Ash Wednesday. They come to receive ashes in the auditorium and/or to receive the Eucharist at Mass upstairs in the Church. Volunteers will be in the lobby of St Peter's handing out the Lenten Schedule of programs, masses and devotions that will be offered during the Forty Days of journeying from Ash Wednesday to the life-giving waters of Baptism

at Holy Saturday Service on the evening before Easter.

Whether the temperature is cold or moderate, whether it is snowing or raining, sunny, windy or calm, those wanting to change their lives and be marked with ashes for the journey to Easter, will wait in line around the block from St Peter's, to LaSalle Street and to Clark St. The noon hour especially will witness thousands of people inch their way into church to be marked with the Ashes of conversion. All through the day there are eight people available to mark the foreheads of each person with ashes in the form of the cross and announce to the person kneeling: "Remember, man/woman, you are dust and unto dust you shall return." Or the minister may say: "Turn away from sin and believe in the Good News!" How we need to remember these words all through the Season of Lent.

In the late Middle Ages, as sermons began to be given in the vernacular instead of Latin, the English word *lent* was adopted in England to name these Forty Days. The word Lent, from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten* initially meant *spring* - Springtime, coming to life, be born, from seeming death to buds and flowers and birth of animals.

Many other languages name this season of forty days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving with a word that comes from the Latin for forty days: Quadragesima. For example: Cuaresma (Spanish), Quaresma (Portuguese), Careme (French), Quaresima (Italian), Korizma (Croatian), Carghas (Irish), Carawys (Welsh).



During the first seven hundred years of the Church, Lent was the final, intensive preparation for the

Catechumens becoming members of the Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist during Holy Saturday night. Those already baptized journeyed with the Catechumens during Lent with prayer and support. When the Order of Catechumens ceased in the Middle Ages, Lent became a time for



those already Baptized to repent, do penance, convert, forgive and be forgiven. Fasting for all Catholics – no meat and only one full meal – became the norm. Stations of the Cross on Fridays, meditation on the suffering and dying of Jesus became

the center focus of our Lenten Journey.

Before 1952, the Easter Vigil Service was celebrated on Holy Saturday morning, with very few attending. In 1952, Pius XII reformed the Holy Week Liturgy and the Easter Vigil Service became again the night service before Easter – Service of Fire, Word, Water, and Eucharist. The Night of all Nights became again the whole focus of the forty days of Lent – the night of dying and rising, of going down into the Waters of death-dealing, life-giving Baptism, of being born into the Body of Christ, anointed by the Holy Spirit with the newly consecrated Oil of Chrism, and of eating and drinking for the first time the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass. The Church gives birth on this night to new members of the Church. All of Lent leads to this life-giving action of the Church gathered around the newly blessed Fire that dispels the darkness, around the Word of God that tells the story of God’s creation of the world and the new creation through the Holy Spirit and Jesus’ Resurrection.

For those of us already Baptized, Lent is a season for us to prepare to renew our Baptismal vows on Holy Saturday or on Easter Sunday. Our preparation consists in: our intensified prayer, our fasting from all that hinders our relationship with God and others, and our more compassionate concern for the poor.

Lent: Season for Fasting/Feasting

“Fasting from” has as its purpose the “Feasting on.” From what do we need to fast this year so that we can feast on the goodness of God’s love?

Fast from judging others-Feast on Affirmation
Fast from discontentment-Feast on Gratitude

Fast from anger-Feast on patience
Fast from pessimism-Feast on Optimism
Fast from worry-Feast on God’s Care
Fast from complaining-Feast on Appreciation
Fast from bitterness-Feast on Compassion for Others
Fast from discouragement-Feast on Hope
Fast from suspicion-Feast on Truth
Fast from idle gossip-Feast on Silence

Lent and the Corporal Works of Mercy



Do you remember the Corporal Works of Mercy? Here is a list of the Corporal Works of Mercy plus a short reflection.

Feed the Hungry – Share what you have with those who are hungry for food, for affirmation, for love, for hope, for a smile, for a hug



Give Drink to the Thirsty – Share your joy and hope with those whose lives are dry and lonely.



Clothe the Naked – Stand up for those who are most weak and vulnerable.



Shelter the Homeless – Reach out to the unloved and the unpopular, make everyone welcome in your heart.



Visit the Imprisoned – Help those who are locked up by fear or age or sadness



Visit the Sick – Be there for the people who are lacking in health of body, mind or soul



Bury the Dead – Remember with love, prayer, and respect those who are separated by distance or death.



The Catechism of the Catholic Church states in Article **2447**: The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses

to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God as we read in the Letter of James:

“He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none and he who has food must do likewise. But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you. If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?”

The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25:31-46 is the source of our Corporal Works of Mercy: Jesus said “Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom that was destined for you from the foundations of the universe. “For I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. I was an outcast and you took me in. I was naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me.” May our hearts be overflowing with Mercy toward all especially during these Forty Days of Lent.

Words of Wisdom

- God, grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change, the courage to change the one I can, and the wisdom to know it's me
- Dear God, I have a problem - it's me.
- Growing old is inevitable. Growing UP is optional.
- There is no key to happiness. The door is always open.
- Silence is often interpreted but never misquoted.
- Do the math. Count your blessings.
- Faith is the ability to not panic.
- Laugh every day; it's like inner jogging.
- If you worry, you didn't pray. If you pray, don't worry.
- Prayer is kind of like calling home every day.
- Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be bent out of shape.
- The most important things in your house are the people.
- When we get tangled up in our problems, be still. God wants us to be still so He can untangle the knots.

Your Personal Financial Considerations

Most of us would like to leave a legacy for our loved ones and/or St. Peter Church in the Loop. The question, however, is how does one go about doing this? Here are some initial ideas.

- 1) Leave a percentage in your will to different family members and St. Peter Church.
- 2) If you are taking a required minimum from your Qualified Accounts, you may use all or part of it to purchase a sizable life insurance policy and designate family members and St. Peter Church as beneficiaries of the policy.
- 3) If you have financial assets (like CDs etc.) that you don't need to live off of, you could *leverage up* these assets through life insurance and ultimately leave much larger sums to family and St. Peter Church. If done correctly, you could have access to the principal should you have need of it.
- 4) If you have old life insurance policies, you may add St. Peter Church as full or partial beneficiary.
- 5) If you have a need for Long Term Care Insurance, you could *leverage up* certain of your assets to provide for you own Long Term Care costs and leave residual benefits for St. Peter Church.
- 6) As a more advanced tool for estate planning, a

Charitable Remainder Unitrust to benefit both family and St. Peter Church might be worth considering.

- 7) If none of the above work for you or you want to do something special and extra for St. Peter Church, you can buy a life insurance policy and make St. Peter Church owner and beneficiary of the policy. You may receive a tax deduction for the premium of the policy. Regarding the tax deduction, consult your tax preparer.

If you would like a free consultation on either 1) any of the above ideas or 2) other creative ways of leaving a legacy for your family or St. Peter Church, call Peter Wells at 847-543-4886.

Leaving a Legacy for St. Peter Church in the Loop

St. Peter Church in the Loop is a sacred space where much healing and spiritual comfort and rejuvenation occur. Would you please consider leaving a legacy in your will or estate plan for St. Peter Church in the Loop? Would you like to leave St. Peter Church say \$10,000 or \$25,000 or \$50,000 or more from your current assets or *create* such an asset for a fraction of the ultimate gift? For ideas on how to create your dream gift to St. Peter Church in the Loop call Peter Wells at 847-543-4886.

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:

OFFERING: Individual, \$25.00 _____ Family, \$100.00 _____ (Immediate family, parents and children)