

St. Peter's Church



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*Franciscans of the
Sacred Heart Province*

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No. 8

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PASTORAL MUSINGS . . .

ASH WEDNESDAY MUSINGS

(This week's Pastoral Musings . . . is offered by Fr. Lawrence Jagdfeld, O.F.M., St. Peter's Bible Study Teacher.)

So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect
(Matthew 5:48).

This line of Scripture comes from the text of the passage that we commonly call "The Sermon on the Mount." It comes at the end of a long discussion that Jesus has with his disciples about the demands of the Law. ***Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place.*** He follows this by drawing up a list of what the law demands and comparing that to what he is demanding. *You have heard it said . . . , but I say to you . . .*

On the 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time, this past Sunday, we read a portion of Luke's version of that same discourse. Luke's version is shorter and has dropped most of the questions about the Jewish Law because his audience was not the Hebrew people but the Gentiles. He also states the conclusion differently. ***So be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is merciful*** (Luke 6:36). Does that sound like the same sentiment to you? I can tell you that until recently, while I was familiar with both statements, I didn't realize that they are two different versions of the same text. To most of us, "perfection" and "mercy" seem like two entirely different issues; but are they?

Most of us would have no difficulty in identifying God as "perfect." We describe God as omniscient, omnipresent,

almighty or all powerful. Francis of Assisi praised God by saying, "You are the good, all good, the highest good."

I daresay that most of us would also have no difficulty in saying that we are "imperfect." We are so far and away different from God that the earliest Scriptures described God as "Holy," meaning "totally other than . . ."

How does God describe Himself? In the Book of Exodus, we read:

Having come down in a cloud, the LORD stood with him (Moses) there and proclaimed his name, "LORD." Thus the LORD passed before him and cried out, "The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity, continuing his kindness for a thousand generations, and forgiving wickedness and crime and sin; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless, but punishing children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation for their fathers' wickedness!" Moses at once bowed down to the ground in worship.

God's "self-image" is rooted in the concept of *Hesed*, a Hebrew word which is translated as "steadfast love." No matter what human beings do, God will not forsake that covenanted love. When we slip and fall, God nurses our wounds with *hesed*. When we fall into the mire of perversion, God washes us clean with *hesed*. When we reject God, rebel against God, abandon God, God chases us down; and when God catches us, God embraces us with *hesed*. Why? Isaiah the prophet answers the question this way:

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; Let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your

thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.

Psalm 103 is one of the more frequently used psalms in the Sunday Lectionary. We heard part of it this past Sunday, used as a response to the reading from 1 Samuel about how David chose not to harm Saul despite the fact that Saul was hunting him down with the intention of killing him. In that psalm, we hear three comparisons which describe God's *hesed*:

As the heavens tower over the earth, so God's love towers over the faithful. As far as the east is from the west, so far have our sins been removed from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on the faithful. (Psalm 103:11-13)

Mercy and forgiveness are at the very heart of God's perfection. Mercy and forgiveness are what God is all about. For many of us who grew up not a few years ago, we were used to hearing about God's justice, a justice that exercised itself by punishing the sinner. We knew that God would forgive us if we said we were sorry, if we went to confession, did our penance and amended our life. However, we also knew that there was punishment in a store, not only for the unrepentant person – who may have been destined for eternal punishment – but also for the repentant person. Purgatory was there to satisfy God's justice. What we failed to realize and what the Church failed to preach was that **MERCY IS THE PATTERN OF GOD'S JUSTICE.**

In that first discourse of Jesus, both Matthew and Luke tell us this:

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love (continued on page 4)

Activities This Week

Monday, February 26

12:10 pm When Did I See You Hungry? (A/B)
12:10 pm Ministry to Divorced/Separated (C)
5:00 pm Chaste Living (A)

Tuesday, February 27

11:30 am Contemplative Prayer (FCh)
12:10 pm Flannery O'Connor Book Study (C)
5:30 pm Bro. Jacoba SFO (C)
5:30 pm Legion of Mary (P)

Wednesday, February 28

12:10 pm Repair My House (C)
12:10 pm San Damiano SFO (C)
1:30 pm Walking the Labyrinth (A)
5:40 pm Lenten Evening Prayer (A/B/C)

Thursday, March 1

12:00 pm AA (C)
12:10 pm FAQs About Penance (A/B)
12:10 pm Prayer Group (P)

Friday, March 2

12:10 pm Bible Study (C)
4:15 pm Stations of the Cross (Ch)
5:30 pm Bro. Jacoba SFO (P)

Key to Abbreviations

A/B/C: St. Clare Auditorium
CH: Church
P: St. Paschal Room
FCh: Friary Chapel

12- Step Meetings

AA: Thursdays at Noon (A)

WEEKEND PRESIDERS

Saturday, February 24

5:00 pm - Fr. Jim Perluzzi

Sunday, February 25

9:00 am - Fr. Bob Pawell
11:00 am - Fr. Michael-Luke Ubben
12:30 pm - Fr. George Musial
6:00 pm - Fr. Bob Sprott

Ministry to Divorced and Separated - Mondays: 12:10 - 12:50 pm in St. Clare Auditorium (C) This is a support group for divorced or separated who want to find recovery and reclaim peace in their heart and mind.

Meditative/Contemplative Prayer Group Tuesdays: 11:40 - 12:10 pm in the Friary Chapel* and Wednesdays: 5:30 - 6:00 pm in the St. Clare Auditorium (A) One-half hour of silent contemplative prayer followed by a short period of shared reflection and/or questions. The session begins and ends promptly to allow for commuting schedules. All those with an interest in this prayer style are invited to participate.

* Please be at the elevator near the security desk by 11:35 am to be escorted to the Friary Chapel.

Bible Study - Fridays: 12:10 - 12:50 pm in the St. Clare Auditorium (C) Fr. Lawrence Jagdfeld, ofm, leads discussion on the Scripture readings for the coming Sunday. The texts are provided.

Franciscan Priests are available for consultation or spiritual direction.

Monday - Friday 10:30 am - 6:00 pm.

No appointment is necessary.

Come to the Front Office in the lobby and we'll be glad to assist you.



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(continued from page 2) your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matthew 5:43-48)

Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit (is) that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as (also) your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:31-36)

The words are different. The message is the same.

So here we stand on the brink of another Lent. Once again, we are going to hear those familiar words: "Turn away from sin and believe the Good News." "Remember, you are dust and unto dust you will return."

Once again, we will respond, "Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned," knowing full well that God has no choice to be anything but merciful because mercy makes God who God

is. **Mercy says absolutely nothing about the one who receives it; mercy says volumes about the one who bestows it.** Mercy is, by its very nature, a gift received from one who is, in effect, behaving like God. The one who is merciful is remembering that to be made in the image of God calls for us to behave like God behaves. If you want to be perfect, you have to be merciful. St. Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians:

The first man was from the earth, earthly; the second man, from heaven. As was the earthly one, so also are the earthly, and as is the heavenly one, so also are the heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one. (1 Corinthians 15:47-49)

When it comes time to stand before God, face to face with the living embodiment of *hesed*, the very personification of steadfast love, mercy and compassion, God will want to remind us of the many times that we prayed: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." How well did we live out that prayer? As I have thought to myself and said not a few times, "God help us if we get what we pray for."

So my suggestion for our Lenten journey this year is to draw near perfection by forgiving someone who needs to be forgiven, by rethinking our position on the death penalty, by laying aside our grudges and grievances and embracing mercy, by reaching out to undocumented aliens rather than calling them "illegals," by doing whatever it takes to bring mercy to fruition in your life.

~Fr. Lawrence Jagdfeld, O.F.M.

WORKING WITH THE SCRIPTURES*(Luke 4:1-13)*

“Is that all there is?” It’s an old song but an even older question. “Is that all there is?” I saw a commercial on TV the other evening. A well-dressed, 60-ish man was telling the viewer not to stop dreaming just because you’re over 65. I’m not really sure what product the commercial was selling but what stayed with me was the look on that man’s face. He was following his dream at an age when many people are tempted to believe that they’re too old to dream, and the passion in his voice declared that for him ‘that’ is definitely NOT all there is!

What are we passionate about? In Luke’s gospel Jesus is led by the devil out into the desert to be tempted, to see what Jesus is passionate about. Jesus is hungry. He hasn’t eaten in 40 days. Perhaps he will be passionate about food? That certainly wouldn’t be unexpected, as anyone who has ever been on a diet can attest. But Jesus is not passionate about food. His passion is to give himself as bread for others.

Perhaps, then, power and glory might be Jesus’ passion? All one has to do is pick up a newspaper or turn on the television to see how ancient rivalries over power and glory continue to rage in the streets of cities and towns across the globe. But Jesus is not passionate about power and glory. Rather, his passion is to stoop down and wash feet.

Danger, then – perhaps Jesus will be passionate about risk-taking, a kind of biblical stock trader or Nascar driver? But Jesus is not passionate about taking risks, either. His passion is more about calming stormy seas and healing injured travelers.

“You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.” Do we believe that? Are we as passionate as the man in that commercial about what we believe? Or are we tempted to care more about the size of our waistline – or of our bank account? “Is that all there is?” I guess it all depends on what our “that” is...

**Scripture Readings
for the Week****Sunday, February 25**

Dt 26:4-10; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13

Monday, February 26

Lv 19:1-18; Mt 25:31-46

Tuesday, February 27

Is 55:10-11; Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday, February 28

Jon 3:1-10; Lk 11:29-32

Thursday, March 1

Est C: 12-25; Mt 7:7-12

Friday, March 2

Ez 18:21-28; Mt 5:20-26

Saturday, March 3

Dt 26:16-19; Mt 5:43-48

**Saints’ Days and
Special Observances****Sunday, February 25**

1st Sunday of Lent

Monday, February 26

Lenten Weekday

Tuesday, February 27

Lenten Weekday

Wednesday, February 28

Lenten Weekday

Thursday, March 1

Lenten Weekday

Friday, March 2

Commemoration of St. Agnes of Bohemia

Saturday, March 3

Commemoration of St. Katherine Drexel

Thinking about taxes this season? Let the caring volunteers of the Tax Assistance Program - TAP - prepare yours for FREE! (Free services are geared to those who qualify.) Visit one of their 26 community locations to have your tax return electronically prepared and e-filed for free by a volunteer professional. Sites are open on Saturday mornings and select weeknights from January 23rd to April 24th. For site locations and more information call (312) 409-1555 or visit www.taxassistance.org.

MEMORIAL CANDLES

You can arrange to have a year-long MEMORIAL VIGIL LIGHT lit for your special intention here at St. Peter's Church for a donation of **\$150**. Your gift to St. Peter's for the year-long Memorial Vigil Light helps to support our ministry and works. And on our part, you and your intentions are remembered daily in our prayers for our helpers and benefactors. Application Forms are available in the Front Office or call (312) 372-5111.

Many thanks to those of you who have contributed to St. Peter's collection these past two weeks. Your gifts are essential to our ministry, and we are grateful.

\$3,612.00 Total Weekday Collection during the week of February 8 - 14, 2007

(An average of \$100.33 for each of 36 weekday Masses)

\$2,478.00 Total Sunday Collection for February 10 - 11, 2007

(An average of \$495.60 for each of 5 Sunday Masses)

\$6,090.00 Total Collection at Sunday & Weekday Masses February 8 - 14, 2007

Some who visit St. Peter's are confused about our funding and think we are a supported ministry of the Archdiocese. Not so! The costs related to the 41 Masses, the 57 hours of Confession, and counseling from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM that we provide each week must be funded by those of you who grace our pews. The Friars are delighted to provide these and other services, but can only do so with your support—both prayerful and financial. Please be generous!

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New Tax Rules Regarding Substantiation of Charitable Contributions

Effective January 1, 2007, taxpayers will not be able to claim a charitable deduction for amounts donated to a charity unless the taxpayer is able to document the donation with either a bank record or a written communication from the charity. Canceled checks and other bank records are also sufficient documentation.

Due to this new tax law, beginning with contributions made in 2007, donors to St. Peter's Church in the Loop who itemize their tax returns will no longer be able to deduct contributions to St. Peter's unless they maintain a bank record or written contribution statement from St. Peter's.

If you wish to ensure deductibility of your contributions to St. Peter's, please use a check, direct deposit from your bank account, ParishPay, or envelopes found in the church and narthex. St. Peter's will continue to track contributions made using envelopes and will produce a periodic written statement of contributions made during 2007. Please note that St. Peter's cannot track cash contributions donated in the collection baskets without a church envelope.

This new tax rule does not replace the existing rule regarding the requirement for St. Peter's to substantiate donations of \$250 or more with a written acknowledgment.

LENT 2007

Ash Wednesday, February 21

Ashes imposed 6:00am - 7:00pm

St. Clare Auditorium (*basement of St. Peter's Church*)

Schedule of Masses on Ash Wednesday

6:15am; 7:15am; 8:15am; 10:00am;

11:30am; 12:15pm; 1:15pm; 3:00pm;

4:30pm; 5:00pm; 5:45pm

Confession Schedule: 7:30 am - 6:00pm



Walking the Labyrinth

Wednesdays: 1:30 - 5:30 pm

(Begins Feb. 28)

Evening Prayer for Lent

Wednesdays: 5:40 pm

(Begins Feb. 28)

Stations of the Cross

Fridays: 4:15pm

(Begins Feb. 23)

Lenten Regulations

Abstinence from meats is to be observed by all Catholics 14 years old and older on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays of Lent.

Fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Those who are bound by this may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

The special Paschal fast and abstinence are prescribed for Good Friday and encouraged for Holy Saturday.

By the threefold discipline of fasting, almsgiving and prayer the Church keeps Lent from Ash Wednesday until the evening of Holy Thursday. All of the faithful and the catechumens should undertake serious practice of these three traditions. Failure to observe any penitential days at all or a substantial number of such days must be considered serious.



Franciscan Outreach Association

Benefit to help the Homeless

We encourage you to attend "Art From the Heart". This event will feature a silent art auction, wine and cheese, and live music by Jeff Churchwell. Saturday, March 3, 7:30-9:30 PM at Franciscan Outreach Association, 1645 W. LeMoyné, \$25 (\$35 at door), For more information/ tickets, call 773-278-6724, or www.franoutreach.org/events.

Living of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

The Secular Franciscans fulfill their goal through their particular state in life in **collaboration** with other members of the Franciscan family - Friars Minor, Poor Clares and Third Order Religious. The aim is to **renew** and **build up** the Body of Christ from within, with simple straight forward **living of the Gospel of Jesus Christ**.

Come and See . . . The San Damiano Secular Franciscan fraternity invites you to an information session on **Wednesday, February 28 from 12:10 - 12:50 pm in St. Clare Auditorium.** **A new formation class will be starting!** Questions: Call Linda at 630-969-2235.

Lenten Programs

All programs take place from 12:10 - 12:50pm (unless otherwise indicated) in St. Clare Auditorium. Programs are open to all. No registration is required. Free-will offering.

Flannery O'Connor: The Accurate Naming of the Things of God **Book Study with Fr. Bob Sprott, O.F.M.**

Tuesdays: February 6 - May 1

Fr. Bob Sprott continues the study of the works of Flannery O'Connor, one of the most interesting and powerful American Catholic writers of the 20th century. Most of the time will be spent on her fictions (two novels and many short stories), but we will also read some of her essays and letters. Although the full study began with eleven sessions this past fall, people are welcome to come to this new series whether or not they participated in the fall, and are free to attend as frequently as they wish.

Please bring a copy of the book *Flannery O'Connor: Collected Works*, by Flannery O'Connor. (Published by the Library of America; ISBN 0-940450-37-2; retails for \$35.00 - hardbound. Available in the St. Peter's Book & Gift Shop.)

When Did I See You Hungry? **Thursday, February 23 & Monday, February 26**

Video Presentation

This short film by documentary filmmaker and award-winning author Gerard Thomas Straub is a photographic meditation on the plight of the poor and our responsibility to help them. The film features powerful and poignant black and white photographs from Mr. Straub's book *When Did I See You Hungry?* which allow the viewer to see more closely things he or she knows about but is not attentive to. More than just capturing the agony of life in the slums, these photos reveal the hidden humanity of the poor, their spirit of joy and will to survive. (*Same presentation on both afternoons.*)

FAQs About Penance: Christian, Lenten & Franciscan

Fr. Bob Pawell, O.F.M.

Thursday, March 1

Lent is the liturgical season of Penance. Fr. Bob Pawell will discuss the richness of this often misunderstood but necessary aspect of Christian life. The lecture will address these questions: What did Jesus say about penance? What has the Church said about penance? How have Franciscans understood penance?

Theology of the Body Made Simple **St. Peter's Young Adult Group Book Study**

Thursday, March 1

5:30 - 6:30 pm

Young adults (college age, 20's & 30's) meet on the first Thursday of the month to discuss the short book **Theology of the Body Made Simple** by Anthony Percy. The study began in February - it's not too late for you to join the group and discussion!

Please bring a copy of the book (ISBN 0-8198-7419-1) which is available for purchase in St. Peter's Book & Gift Shop (\$9.95+tax). Questions: Contact MaryBeth at: mb_sivak81@yahoo.com or Fr. Paul Gallagher at frpaul.stpeter@yahoo.com or (312) 628-1252.

The Cycle of Addictions**Dr. Kevin McClone****Mondays: March 5, 12, 26**

Week I - In this fast paced world that often seeks escape from life's pain and stress, addictions of various forms are on the rise. This presentation will highlight the pervasive nature of addictions in our world. We will explore what we mean by an addiction as well as explore the various dynamics of the addictive process such as denial, shame and powerlessness. We will highlight its devastating impact on both persons and families, and the need for healing and recovery.

Week II - Some research suggests that men are more likely to view on-line pornography, while women are more likely to engage in erotic chat. In this talk, Dr. McClone will cover the topic of sexual addiction, one of the fastest growing addictions in our world, and discuss the unique issues faced by men and women who are caught in the web of this addictive cycle, and the implications for recovery and treatment.

Week III - Pornography is an 8 billion dollar industry that markets vulnerable persons, both men and women. In this final session of the series, Dr. McClone will discuss the addiction to pornography in its various forms and explore issues related to pornography in our culture, including cybersex addiction and romance addiction.

The Reality of the Cross: Living with Chronic Disease and Pain**Fr. Bob Hutmacher, O.F.M. & Valerie Kitterman, E.M.T.A., C.R.C.A.****Tuesdays: March 6, 13, 20, 27**

How do we integrate disease and pain into everyday life? Valerie Kitterman has lived with Multiple Sclerosis for 22 years with varying degrees of disability. Fr. Bob Hutmacher has lived with two forms of lymphoma requiring weekly phototherapy treatments for the past 12 years and has recently been diagnosed with poly neuropathy. Ms. Kitterman and Fr. Bob will relate their stories of living with chronic disease, share their experience and knowledge of coping with the realities of pain, and talk about how bringing suffering into the spiritual realm is how we truly live the death and resurrection of Christ.

Contemplative Prayer: A Communion with the Holy**Br. Clarence Klingert, O.F.M.****Thursdays: March 15, 22, 29**

This three-part series will offer a detailed look at the experience of contemplative prayer. The first session will be an historical overview of contemplative prayer; starting with Jesus to the present time. The second session will explore why Prayer of the Heart (Contemplative Prayer) is a mature Christian response to the Holy fulfilling the directive to pray always. The final session will look at teachings and guides from the Spiritual Masters of the Catholic Contemplative Tradition; with practical suggestions for today.

Sage-ing: A New Vision of Getting Older**Michele Baldwin, M.S.S.W., Ph.D****Wednesday, March 28**

This presentation will focus on a new model of late-life development in which old age represents the culminating stage of self-development and spiritual growth. We will explore the attitudes, beliefs and skills that enable older people to become spiritually radiant, physically vital and socially responsible in a world craving for wisdom.



Instruments of Peace
(Inner Serenity & Outer Cooperation)
Mastering Anger and Resentment

Dr. Jerry Hiller & Marilyn Rochon

Feb 28; Mar 7, 14, 21

12:10 - 12:55 pm

St. Clare Auditorium

\$5 Suggested Donation

Repair My House



Pax et Bonum
Award

The same call that Francis of Assisi heard from God in 1205, summons us today more than ever before: *“Francis, go and repair my house, for as you can see, it is in ruins.”*

Anger and resentment make our stressful lives even more burdensome. Increasing inner serenity and outer cooperation with others makes us the instruments of peace we long to see in the world. Mastering anger and resentment is a first step.

February 28 - How Can You give Up ONE Resentment - Learn practical information and concrete skills for giving up one resentment.

March 7 - What Are the PURPOSES of Anger and Resentment - What do we “get” out of working so hard to maintain anger and resentment?

March 14 - Anger, Resentment and Relationships - Constant bickering, sarcasm, and revenge keep us stuck. Learn alternatives to these behaviors.

March 21 - Anger, Resentment, Hostility, Cynicism and Heart Disease - How can you make life-style changes that can affect your health?

Previously in this series:

01/17 - Anger, Resentment & Self-Esteem; 01/24 - Anger Resentment & Pleasers

01/31 - Anger, Resentment & Controllers; 02/07 - Anger, Resentment & Perfectionists

Previously in this series:

January 17 - Anger, Resentment and Self-Esteem

January 24 - Anger Resentment and Pleasers

January 31 - Anger, Resentment and Controllers

February 7 - Anger, Resentment and Perfectionists

Repair My House programs are available on CD . Please call 312-902-3553 or e-mail Marilyn at repairmyhouse@earthlink.net for a complete list of talks.

NO REGISTRATION NEEDED. BRING YOUR LUNCH. BRING A FRIEND.

Repair My House, *“mind, body, soul skills for the journey,”* offers practical and positive psychology for everyday problems and life-long patterns that interfere with coping, balancing, and *“bearing fruit”* in our very stressful lives. Over 27,000 people have attended this lunchtime programs now in its 17th year! You are welcome to attend all the sessions or only those which your schedule allows. Come and see what **REPAIR MY HOUSE** is all about!