

Society of Saint Pius X

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SAINT MARY'S NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2016

My Dear Faithful,



he season of Christmas is only just over and we will shortly enter another season, which is Lent. The season of Lent is often regarded with stupor and trembling; we often grumble and are not at all looking forward to it. This may be a sign that we need it even more than we think we do!

The fact that Lent in this year closely follows on from the Christmas festivities impresses our minds. This is a good thing. At least we know that it is coming and we can prepare ourselves to spend this special time of the year as God wills.

This closeness shows something important: Our Lord did not have a long public life, when He could have preached to many more people, because He wanted to perform His work of Redemption by His death on the Cross as soon as possible. He wanted this act, which repulsed His human nature, because it was necessary in order to redeem us. He wanted to make us understand the price of our souls.



By the season of Lent, the Catholic Church wants us to participate in this work of Redemption in a particular way. We participate in this work all our life long by carrying our cross, but we do need

this particular period of Lent in which to make the firm resolution to work on, and correct, some of our faults. These efforts we may make should be beneficial for our own souls and as well for many other souls.

Any sin demands reparation. Nowadays, there are many scandals and public sins which demand reparation. Hence comes a question: who will give back the honour which God has lost if nobody makes reparation for them? Certainly not those who carry on with these horrible faults. But you might say: "Father, I have enough with my own sins. It's not my fault if people become more and more evil and reject God." This is true but who will make the reparation for these faults if not those who desire to serve Our Lord as their only master? Who will pray and make sacrifices for the sake of Our Holy Mother Church so troubled from everywhere?

Let us be generous and think of which kind of effort we ought to make for this purpose. It's not only a question of giving up something that we could well do without, we also need to correct ourselves for the greater honour of God and the salvation of our souls.

May God help you to have a fruitful season of Lent.

Father Vianney Vandendaele +

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday, which is the first day of the Lenten fast.

The name *dies cinerum* (day of ashes) which it bears in the Roman Missal is found in the earliest existing copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary and probably dates from at least the eighth century. On this day all the faithful according to ancient custom are exhorted to approach the altar before the beginning of Mass, and there the priest, dipping his thumb into ashes previously blessed, marks the forehead — or in case of clerics upon the place of the tonsure — of each the sign of the cross, saying the words: "Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return." The ashes used in this ceremony are made by burning the remains of the palms blessed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year. In the blessing of the ashes four prayers are used, all of them ancient. The ashes are sprinkled with holy water and fumigated with incense. The celebrant himself, be he bishop or cardinal, receives, either standing or seated, the ashes from some other priest, usually the highest in dignity of those present. In earlier ages a penitential procession often followed the rite of the distribution of the ashes, but this is not now prescribed.

There can be no doubt that the custom of distributing the ashes to all the faithful arose from a devotional imitation of the practice observed in the case of public penitents. But this devotional usage, the reception of a sacramental which is full of the symbolism of penance (cf. the *cor contritum quasi cinis* of the "Dies Irae") is of earlier date than was formerly supposed. It is mentioned as of general observance for both clerics and faithful in the Synod of Beneventum, 1091 (Mansi, XX, 739), but nearly a hundred years earlier than this the Anglo-Saxon homilist Ælfric assumes that it applies to all classes of men. "We read", he says,



"in the books both in the Old Law and in the

New that the men who repented of their sins bestrewed themselves with ashes and clothed their bodies with sackcloth. Now let us do this little at the beginning of our Lent that we strew ashes upon our heads to signify that we ought to repent of our sins during the Lenten fast."

And then he enforces this recommendation by the terrible example of a man who refused to go to church for the ashes on Ash Wednesday and who a few days after was accidentally killed in a boar hunt (Ælfric, *Lives of Saints*, ed. Skeat, I, 262-266). It is possible that the notion of penance which was suggested by the rite of Ash Wednesday was reinforced by the figurative exclusion from the sacred mysteries symbolized by the hanging of the Lenten veil before the sanctuary.

(from Catholic Encyclopedia)

Ideas of resolutions for Lent

- ◆ **Fast:** give up something
Food, drink, blogs, newspaper, radio, TV programs, films, music, comfortable chair, gossip, give an opinion, speak of ourselves...
- ◆ **Prayer:** establish something
Basic prayers (morning, evening, rosary), family prayer (rosary or even way of the cross on Friday), extra prayers (mental prayer, full rosary, weekday Mass)...
- ◆ **Good work:** help someone (or care for your soul)
Give a hand for common good, tidy up, join the choir, almsgiving, share your belongings, spiritual reading, visit sick people, sign-up for the Passion retreat...

Pick and choose at least one resolution in each category, which should help you to correct a fault.

Parents are invited to help the children in the choice of their resolutions, remind them of these, and also show the example!

The Secret of Mary

THE EXCELLENCE OF THIS PRACTICE OF DEVOTION

38. Dear God, how everything we do comes to so very little! But let us adopt this devotion and place everything in Mary's hands. When we have given her all we possibly can, emptying ourselves completely to do her honour, she far surpasses our generosity and gives us very much for very little. She enriches us with her own merits and virtues. She places our gift on the golden dish of her charity and clothes us, as Rebecca clothed Jacob, in the beautiful garments of her first-born and only Son, Jesus Christ, which are his merits, and which are at her disposal. Thus, as her servants and slaves, stripping ourselves of everything to do her honour, we are clad by her in double garments - namely, the garments, adornments, perfumes, merits and virtues of Jesus and Mary. These are imparted to the soul of the slave who has emptied himself and is resolved to remain in that state.

39. 4. Giving ourselves in this way to our Lady is a practice of charity towards our neighbour of the highest possible degree, because in making ourselves over to Mary, we give her all that we hold most dear and we let her dispose of it as she wishes in favour of the living and the dead.

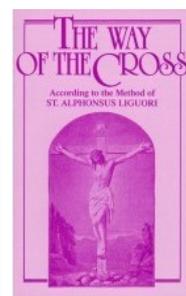
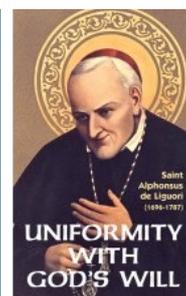
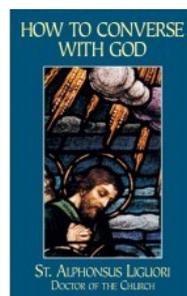
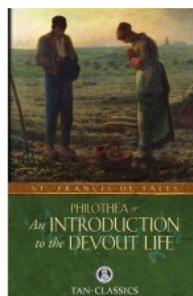
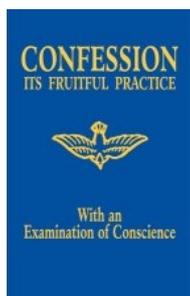
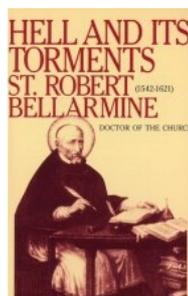
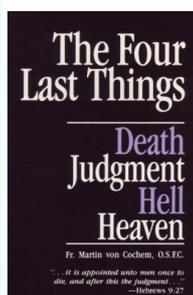
40. 5. In adopting this devotion, we put our graces, merits and virtues into safe keeping by making Mary the depository of them. It is as if we said to her, "See, my dear Mother, here is the good that I have done through the grace of your dear Son. I am not capable of keeping it,

because of my weakness and inconstancy, and also because so many wicked enemies are assailing me day and night. Alas, every day we see cedars of Lebanon fall into the mire, and eagles which had soared towards the sun become birds of darkness, a thousand of the just falling to the left and ten thousand to the right. But, most powerful Queen, hold me fast lest I fall. Keep a guard on all my possessions lest I be robbed of them. I entrust all I have to you, for I know well who you are, and that is why I confide myself entirely to you. You are faithful to God and man, and you will not suffer anything I entrust to you to perish. You are powerful, and nothing can harm you or rob you of anything you hold."

"When you follow Mary you will not go astray; when you pray to her, you will not despair; when your mind is on her, you will not wander; when she holds you up, you will not fall; when she protects you, you will have no fear; when she guides you, you will feel no fatigue; when she is on your side, you will arrive safely home" (Saint Bernard). And again, "She keeps her Son from striking us; she prevents the devil from harming us; she preserves virtue in us; she prevents our merits from being lost and our graces from receding." These words of St Bernard explain in substance all that I have said. Had I but this one motive to impel me to choose this devotion, namely, that of keeping me in the grace of God and increasing that grace in me, my heart would burn with longing for it."



Recommended reading



Notices

Recent death

Of your charity, please pray for the repose of the souls of:

- ♦ Mr. William Jackson of Northwich — 10th January 2016
- ♦ Mrs. Edna Neesam of Redcar — 31st January 2016



**May they
rest in
peace**

Different events

Please note on your diaries these different events:

- ♦ **Vocation day:** all day at Preston (cf. special schedule) — **Sunday 28th February 2016**
- ♦ **York Pilgrimage:** on the footsteps of St. Margaret Clitherow — **Saturday 23rd April 2016**

Easter duties

As Catholics we are obliged to go to confession and Holy Communion once a year and at Easter or thereabouts. This obligation we call Easter duties. The period to fulfil these duties is between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday.

Sunday Mass Schedule and Locations

PRESTON: Our Lady of Victories' Church East Cliff, off Winckley Square - PR1 3NA	Every Sunday: 9.30am
MANCHESTER: Saint Pius X's Chapel 16 Deerpark Road, off Alexandra Road South - M16 8FR	Every Sunday: 12.30pm
LIVERPOOL: Saint Peter and Paul's Church 35 Upper Parliament Street - L8 7LA	2nd & 4th Sunday of the month: 5pm
RHOS-ON-SEA: Saint David's Chapel Conwy Road (A547), Mochdre - LL28 5AA (North Wales)	1st Sunday of the month: 5pm
BINGLEY: The Little House Market Street - BD16 2HP	3rd Sunday of the month: 5pm

Ordinary Weekday Masses at Preston

(This schedule is subject to change; please check beforehand on the **outside notice board** or http://sspx.co.uk/page_chapels.htm)

Monday: 9am
Tuesday: —
Wednesday: —
Thursday: —
1st Friday: 7pm
1st Saturday: Holy Hour at 11am & Mass at 12.15pm