

# **Wellspring**

## **Fransalian Center for Spirituality**

March 8, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have just begun the third week of Lent. In the past two weeks, we reflected on “Prayer” and “Penance” as pathways of Lenten spirituality. This week, I invite you to reflect on “Almsgiving” as another traditional Lenten spiritual discipline. Almsgiving has an important place in all religions and a special place in Jewish and Christian spiritual practices.

The word “Alms” derives from the Greek “eleemosyne”, meaning “mercy”. The Hebrew Scriptures uses the word “sedaqa” meaning “justice” and “mercy” implying that almsgiving restores justice, God’s right order in society. Israelites were to give one tenth of their produce (a tithe) to support the Levites, immigrants, and the poor (Det. 14:28-29); they let their fields lie fallow every seventh year to benefit the poor (Ex. 23:11); Job cared for the poor out of religious convictions (Job 31:16-23).

In the New Testament, Jesus teaches almsgiving: “sell your belongings and give alms (Lk. 12:33; Mt. 19:21); almsgiving, like prayer and fasting, is to be done without fanfare (Mt. 6:2-4). Jesus and the disciples gave alms (Jn. 13:29). Early Christian communities practiced almsgiving in the organized distribution of food in Jerusalem (Acts 6). Paul encouraged offerings from gentile communities for the poor of the Jerusalem Church (Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:25-26; 1 Cor. 16:1-5; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; Gal. 2:10).

Almsgiving continued to be an important spiritual practice in later Christian traditions. Medieval monasteries and Cathedrals used alms from the faithful to maintain hospices and food programs for the poor, the refugees, and the exiles. In modern times bequests, legacies and spontaneous free will offerings finances hospitals and schools for the poor, orphanages, and other charitable institutions. Almsgiving has now become more organized: special collections in Churches; personal gifts to programs and projects that care for the poor; donations to organizations that provide support for the underprivileged nationally and internationally; etc.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving go together – they may be seen as one single spiritual practice, especially during the season of lent. Prayer enables us to celebrate the many blessings of God; fasting motivates almsgiving and almsgiving gives meaning to fasting. The essence of Christian almsgiving is that it should be the expression of Christian charity or love, at cost to self.

During this third week of Lent, prayerfully discern how you may help someone less privileged in your community. Let your almsgiving be a sign of the generosity of your heart.

May God bless you and keep you faithful on your Lenten journey.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

## **Third Week of Lent**

### **March 8 – Monday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

### **Be Still**

**The favors of the LORD are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent;  
They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness.  
(Lamentations 3:22-23)**

### **Collect**

May your unfailing compassion, O Lord,  
cleanse and protect your Church,  
and, since without you she cannot stand secure,  
may she be always governed by your grace.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

### **Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: 2 Kings 5:1-15; Psalm 42**

### **Luke 4:24-30**

Being a Prophet meant many things to many people such as, calling people to purification, a cleansing of life, a conversion of attitude and real repentance; Proclaiming truth; Standing for God and God's law; Calling forth justice; Proclaiming righteousness, God's righteousness; Teaching values; Calling forth virtuous living; Proclaiming unconditional love.....And that is why a Prophet is not acceptable in his own native place.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Learn to listen to the Prophetic voice coming from unexpected sources. Remember, Naaman had to listen to his servants; Abraham had to listen to strangers; Moses had to listen to a burning bush; Mary had to listen to an angel; Joseph had to listen to his dream; John the Baptist had to listen to a voice from the sky.....Let us learn to listen and listen with faith.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders of our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

Remember your most urgent need and that of your family and those in your care.

Remember those who are affected by the pandemic and those who care for them.

Remember all who suffer and all who have no one to care for them.

Our Father...

### **Spiritual Communion**

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

**Spend a few moments in silent prayer**

May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 8 - St. John of God and 18 other saints are remembered this day.**

For more reflections visit our website: [www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)

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## **March 9 – Tuesday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

### **Be Still**

**Self-denial means knowing only Christ, and no longer oneself.**

**It means seeing only Christ, who goes ahead of us,  
and no longer the path that is too difficult for us....**

**Self-denial is saying only: He goes ahead of us; hold fast to him.**

**(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)**

### **Collect**

May your grace not forsake us, O Lord, we pray,  
but make us dedicated to your holy service  
and at all times obtain for us your help.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

**Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: Daniel 3:25, 34-43; Psalm 25**

## **Mathew 18:21-35**

Peter asked Jesus how often he must forgive his brother. The Rabbis taught that a man must forgive his brother three times. Peter was willing to go further than that, suggesting seven times!!! Jesus responded by suggesting seventy times seven – forgiveness without limit!!!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

We have been forgiven much! And we have been forgiven without condition! Learn to forgive from the heart!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Jesus told them a parable about a servant who was forgiven a great debt. This servant went out and treated a fellow servant without mercy and his unforgiving attitude was condemned!!!

Our calling is to forgive others as we have been forgiven, without condition and without limit.

**May forgiveness be your Easter gift – forgive yourself and others without limit!!!**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

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## **Spend a few moments in silent prayer**

May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 9 - St. Frances of Rome and 5 other saints are remembered this day.**

**For more reflections visit our website: [www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)**

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## **March 10 – Wednesday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

## **Be Still**

**No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others.  
So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great.  
(John Chrysostom)**

## **Collect**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that, schooled through Lenten observance  
and nourished by your word,  
through holy restraint  
we may be devoted to you with all our heart  
and be ever united in prayer.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

## **Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9; Psalm 147**

### **Mathew 5:17-19**

Jesus told the disciples that he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill the law. He also told them that greatness in God's kingdom depended on faithfulness to God's law.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Jesus came to bring out the meaning and purpose of the law – to fulfill it – to realize it, to achieve its purpose. The real purpose of the law which Jesus came to fulfill is at the heart of the Ten Commandments and the beatitudes. One word that could identify this purpose is reverence or deep respect – reverence for God, for self, for other and for all of God's creation. It is this reverence, deep respect, intimate love that Jesus came to fulfill, to show us in actual life what reverence for God and God's creation means.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Keep searching for the wisdom of God! Be faithful to God and God's law! Learn to fulfill God's law, to achieve its purpose!**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders of our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

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Our Father...

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May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 10 - St. Dominic Savio and 18 other saints are remembered this day.**

**For more reflections visit our website: [www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)**

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## **March 11 – Thursday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

### **Be Still**

**O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faintheartedness, lust of power, and idle talk. But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to your servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sin and not to judge my brother, for You are blessed from all ages to all ages. Amen.**  
(St. Ephraim the Syrian)

### **Collect**

We implore your majesty most humbly, O Lord,  
that, as the feast of our salvation draws ever closer,  
so we may press forward all the more eagerly  
towards the worthy celebration of the Paschal Mystery.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

## **Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: Jeremiah 7:23-28; Psalm 95**

### **Luke 11:14-23**

Slander is a very cruel thing, may be, one of the worst things that you can do to others. Slander often sticks because of the tendency of many to think the worst of themselves and others and some prefer to hear the derogatory rather than the complimentary story.

**Do you have a tendency to think the worst of yourself or others? Do you have a tendency to deliberately impute low motives to someone you dislike? Do you have a tendency to repeat unpleasant or slanderous or malicious stories and hurt the reputation of others?**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

One cannot follow Jesus in a half-hearted manner. One is either totally committed to the world or the Lord. We cannot have divided loyalties. There is no neutral position in the Kingdom of God. You have to take a stand. You are either on the way or in the way.

Is your commitment becoming more and more undivided, complete and whole?

Are you on the way? How is your journey progressing? Are you aware of anything on the way that seems to get in your way?

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders of our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

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Our Father...

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May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 11 - Saint John Ogilvie and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

**For more reflections visit our website: [www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)**

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## **March 12 – Friday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

### **Be Still**

**Lent is a time for discipline, for confession, for honesty, not because God is mean or fault-finding or finger-pointing but because he wants us to know the joy of being cleaned out, ready for all the good things he now has in store for us.**

### **Collect**

Pour your grace into our hearts, we pray, O Lord,  
that we may be constantly drawn away from unruly desires  
and obey by your own gift the heavenly teaching you give us.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

## **Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: Hosea 14:2-10; Psalm 81**

### **Mark 12:28-34**

Jesus sums up the law and the prophets into “LOVE” - love with our whole being. As St. Augustine puts it, it is only in loving God with our whole being that we come to love our life, self and others in the proper way.

**By loving God and walking in His ways, we do not use others to meet our needs or exploit them for our purposes. By centering on God's love, we are liberated to love everything as God's gifts. We come to experience ourselves as loved and gifted. We no longer need to prove our worth.**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Lent calls us to reflect on our commitments and loyalties. We don't have to choose between loving God and others. We are to love God, ourselves and others. Commitment and loyalty to God include love of self and others. Love of God does not divide. Love heals, unifies, integrates, brings Wholeness and Holiness.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Love of God does not turn us away from the world - love opens our eyes to see the world as God's gift to us. Love gives us a new, clearer, and true vision of the world around us.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

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May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 12 - St Seraphina/Fina and 13 other saints are remembered this day.**

For more reflections visit our website: [www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)

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## **March 13 – Saturday, Third Week of Lent**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Take a moment of silence to thank the Lord for all that has been.

Take another moment to remember your sinfulness and to pray for forgiveness and peace.

### **Be Still**

**The cross is not the suffering tied to natural existence, but the suffering tied to being Christians. The cross is never simply a matter of suffering, but a matter of suffering and rejection for the sake of Jesus Christ, not for the sake of some other arbitrary behavior or confession.**  
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

## **Collect**

Rejoicing in this annual celebration  
of our Lenten observance,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that, with our hearts set on the paschal mysteries,  
we may be gladdened by their full effects.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever

## **Scripture Readings of Mass of the Day: Hosea 6:1-6; Psalm 51**

### **Luke 18: 9-14**

Jesus spoke the parable of a tax collector and a Pharisee at prayer. The tax collector humbled himself before God and prayed for mercy and was blessed with forgiveness, justification, and mercy. The Pharisee claimed to be good, better than the tax collector, justified himself before God and went home feeling good about himself. The tax collector who humbled himself before God that went home forgiven and healed while the Pharisee went home feeling good about himself and better than others.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Jesus says: “everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled while he who humbles himself shall be exalted”. To be humble is to acknowledge and accept the truth about self. Humility is not a denial of self and self-worth – it is an affirmation and grateful acceptance of all that you are as God’s gift of love. Be grateful and celebrate your life as God’s gift of love!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Be Still for a few moments!**

**Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

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Our Father...

### **Spiritual Communion**

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May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, March 13 - St. Leander of Seville and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

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Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs



