



Rumblings from the Bunker

I THINK I'LL GIVE UP APPLES FOR LENT!

I think I'll give up apples for Lent! I guess to most people this immediately sounds a bit wacky.

I mean if I loved apples such a statement might have some merit. The truth of the matter is I rarely eat an apple. I know I should. I mean we all know, myself included, eating apples would be a lot more healthy than eating...say... pancakes. A lot less fun. More healthy, but less fun. Yes when it comes to apples I am pretty clear, in my opinion, apples belong in three places. Crumble, sponge or tart! So yes I think I'll give up apples for Lent...

...I hope you realize at this stage that I am joking. For me to say that I intend to give up apples for Lent is not only silly, but more importantly, it could show a lack of respect for one of the most sacred seasons in the Church year. There's no doubt though people approach Lent in a variety of ways: smokers might see Lent as a time to try and break the habit others as time to lose weight. I actually heard it the other day, 'thank God it's Lent next week and hopefully I'll lose a few pounds!'

Now look, we can get a little spiritually snooty about these things. There's no point making a fuss that those engaged in the battle of the bulge or trying to quit smoking or give up the 'demon drink' are not taking Lent seriously. They may well be. That's not for us to judge. It's far more important to think through our own plans for Lent.

I use the word deliberately because I have learned from previous years that if I don't have a clear plan then Lent comes and goes and before I know it we are into Holy Week. Now we can slip into being very harsh and judgmental with regard to this, not only of others but ourselves as well, which of course is neither helpful, nor in fact is it good for our soul. However rather than see our failure to in some way live Lent as a reason for blame or castigation I prefer to see Lent as opportunity. Before exploring this I would like to make a note with regard to Lent and Easter.

The point here is, a little bit like my gradual learning of the importance of having the plan, I now also realize that how I live Lent, or indeed how I fail to live Lent has a direct bearing on how well I celebrate Easter. My logic is as follows: Easter is clearly the greatest of all our celebrations. Easter is when we remember, and give God thanks, that He loved us so much that he sent his only Son, Jesus, that we might be saved. It's a great and beautiful feast. It follows that it is a time of grace. However we need to be receptive to this grace. We need to be open. We need to have prepared the soil. Lent is the sowing and Easter the harvest. Lent is the investment and Easter is the dividend, the legacy. With this in mind I can honestly say the years I lived Lent well were the years that I experienced the most Easter joy. (I am sure I do not need to remind you not to confuse that beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit with it's more glitzy cousin, happiness.)

So back to Lent, the plan, and the significance of it, mindful of the great opportunity it affords. I favour a twofold approach. Let me put it in the form of a statement, or perhaps as a resolve or promise. It's my Lenten Contract. It might sound like this:

'By Spy Wednesday this year I will be closer to Jesus, by which I mean I will be better acquainted with him than I am now AND I will be a less sinful person'.

Now that's not bad as an aim, or a goal or objective or intention, but the next step is crucial. So we have the 'what of our Lent' now we need it's 'how'. So now it might look like this:

'By Spy Wednesday I will become closer to Jesus through a weekly slow meditative Scripture rosary and my daily ten minutes reading from my favorite gospel or psalm followed by ten minutes sacred silence listening for the Lord. I will be less sinful through depriving myself of alcohol or dessert and matching this with a kind comment or good turn for a couple of people I am not that keen on. The money I will save on the drink or the desserts throughout Lent, I will give to Peter McVerry or St. Vincent de Paul'.

Corny? Not for you? What's your plan? Whatever it is my friends, don't fail to live Lent this year.

It's too good an opportunity to miss. You'll know the benefit of it come Easter.

MASS INTENTIONS

Ann Gargan	Maisie Garland	Garland Family
Kathleen Harte	Hugh Kessie	Mary Kessie
Eileen O'Byrne	Ellie O'Reilly	Mary Ryle
Michael Ryle	Sam Seale	Margaret Stapleton
Ben Ward		

FAITH MOMENT

The Church, born in prayer, lives and grows in prayer as well. The Holy Spirit inspires the faithful in every age of the Church to a life of prayer. The basic forms of Christian prayer are adoration, petition, repentance, intercession, thanksgiving and praise; the three kinds of prayer are vocal, meditative and contemplative. Christian prayer is always Trinitarian in that we pray in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS,

The true story of Fr Gereon Goldmann, OFM

IGNATIUS PRESS SAN FRANCISCO. 2000 Pp 345

(Originally Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1964)

'Here is the astonishing true story of the harrowing experiences of a young German seminarian drafted into Hitler's dreaded SS at the onset of World War II. Without betraying his Christian ideals, against all odds, and in the face of Evil, Gereon Goldmann was able to complete his priestly training, be ordained, and secretly minister to German Catholic soldiers and innocent civilian victims caught up in the horrors of war.'

Lent: Fri.15th March 10.00 Mass

Followed by a Lenten Talk delivered by Deacon Yanbo
Then time for tea/coffee in the Parish Centre
before Exposition of Blessed Sacrament
during which confession will be available.
12.00 noon Stations of The Cross

Tuesday 19th March 10.00 Morning Prayer
Followed by Lectio Divina

Church Collections

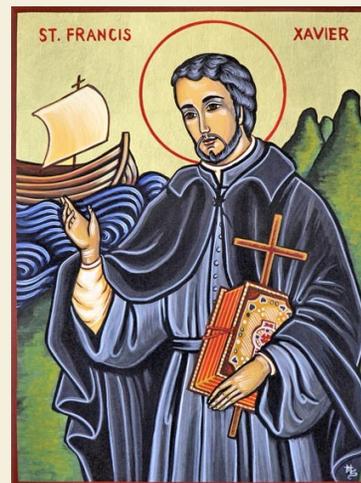
	24 Feb
1st Collection	805
2nd Collection	695
Family Offering	805

St. Vincent De Paul
Monthly Collection
Amounted to: €250
Thank You

RONCALLI REFORM

Next meeting takes place on
Thursday March 21st 7.00 - 9.00pm All welcome.

MASS TIMES



**Novena of Grace
March 4 - 12**

**Fr. Eamonn Mulcahy CSSp
Mass Times**

Sun 10: 12.00 only

Mon 11: 10.00 and 7.00

Tue 12 : 10.00 and 7.00

St. Matthew's

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30

Sunday: 09.00,10.30,12.00

Weekdays:

Mon, Thur, Fri: 10.00

Wed 7.00pm

Family Mass: This Sunday 10.30

Tuesday: 10.00 Prayer Service

Pilgrimage to Lourdes

Tuesday 20th August - Tuesday 27th August

4-Star Hotel Solitude

7 Nights Full Board €800

Single room supplement €252 (subject to availability).

Accompanied by Spiritual Director

Fr. Joe McDonald, St. Matthew's

PLEASE NOTE IT IS POSSIBLE

TO PAY THE COST BY INSTALLMENTS

Contact Eddie Teeling @ 0868063625

Parish Centre or Sacristy:

Phone: 626 56 95

Monday to Friday 10.00am to 1.00pm

GOSPEL READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	11/03	Mt 25: 31-46	'And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.'
Tue	12/03	Mt 6: 7-15	'Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.'
Wed	13/03	Lk 11: 29-32	'This is a wicked generation; it is asking for a sign. The only sign it will be given is the sign of Jonah.'
Thu	14/04	Mt 7: 7-22	'So always treat others as you would like them to treat you; that is the meaning of the Law and the prophets.'
Fri	15/03	Mt 5: 20-26	'If your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.'
Sat	16/03	Mt 5: 43-48	'for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike.'