



# 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR LENT

*By Vinita Hampton Wright*

How do you prepare for Lent? How have you prepared in the past? What are your ideas about what should happen during Lent?

We have the traditional Catholic practices of praying, fasting, and almsgiving. So, we pray more than usual, or we pray with different emphases. We eat smaller or fewer meals or give up a favorite food or drink group. We give more of our resources or give them specifically to special works of mercy during Lent.



Prayer, fasting, and charitable giving continue to be quite good practices during Lent or at any time.

But, you might think, how do I prepare myself for this season? What needs to happen within so that I can practice with more integrity and intention whatever I'm doing on the outside? There are plenty of ideas for actions and practices during Lent; coming up with ideas usually is not the problem. But we don't want to do anything simply to be doing it, even if it's a good thing. We don't want to make a list of merciful works so that we can place a checkmark beside each one as we accomplish it.

It's good to have a plan for doing. It's also good to have a plan for being.

How do I want to be during Lent this year? More quiet and thoughtful? More open to God's desires? Better able to sit with people who need me? More attentive to sacred readings, whether in church or in private? Do I need to be more compassionate toward my own fears and failings? Do I need to become more courageous about using the gifts God has given me?

In the days prior to Lent, try one or more of these suggestions.

- Ask God, every day, "What does my soul need?" Just ask, and wait quietly. Because we're very good at fooling ourselves about how we're doing, it might take several days of praying this question before we're truly open and humble enough to know the answer.

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## FEASTS FOR MARCH

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of March are:

- |    |                                   |    |                                     |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| 2  | Ash Wednesday, Commemoration      | 18 | Cyril of Jerusalem, Opt. Mem.       |
| 3  | Katharine Drexel (USA), Opt. Mem. | 19 | Joseph, Spouse of Mary, Solemnity   |
| 4  | Casimir of Poland, Opt. Mem.      | 20 | Third Sunday of Lent, Sunday        |
| 6  | First Sunday of Lent, Sunday      | 23 | Turibio de Mogrovejo, Opt. Mem.     |
| 7  | Perpetua and Felicity, Opt. Mem.  | 25 | Annunciation of the Lord, Solemnity |
| 8  | John of God, Opt. Mem.            | 27 | Fourth Sunday of Lent, Sunday□      |
| 9  | Frances of Rome, Opt. Mem.        |    |                                     |
| 13 | Second Sunday of Lent, Sunday     |    |                                     |
| 17 | Patrick, Opt. Mem.                |    |                                     |

## THANK YOU

*... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!*

*Psalm 106:2*

*I thank God for the grace of helping me get a new employment at a location that is easily accessible and for the position I wanted. Right after my interview, I was immediately told that I was hired.*

*I feel incredibly grateful for God's Divine Providence.*

*Debbie Lorenzo  
Las Vegas Devotee*

### OUR CENACLE CORNER

Seeking a deeper relationship with God  
through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures

**WHEN WE ARE IN A HURRY  
AND GOD IS NOT**

# GOD TOUCHED ME

*Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.  
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does. — 1 Chronicles 16:24*

## YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS YE HAVE NEED OF

*Matthew 6:8*

*By Marie Monsen | A Present Help  
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When I reached the coast to leave for home I was first to meet three new recruits, help them in any way they needed and see them off for the interior. We had to visit the consul and do some shopping both for them and for others on the field.

We were on the go all day and went everywhere by ricksha. To make sure of their not being lost, it had been impressed upon the three new workers that they must always keep me in sight: it was to be their one concern. They were very careful about it despite the hundred and one fascinating things which drew their attention in the new country, so we managed to get through everything in the three days we had at our disposal.

We had reached the evening of the third day. The new workers were to go on board their boat which was due to leave at midnight. That evening it was I who was not careful enough; but even this was made to work together for good by One who is a Father to His often thoughtless children.

We had five rickshas, one for each of us and one for their suitcases. The new workers still felt themselves responsible in the matter of not losing sight of me, as my ricksha was in front. I remember sitting there profoundly thankful that we had managed to do all we had planned and that everything had done well, while actually, just then things were going anything but well. It was raining and with their hoods up and all rickshas look alike. True, each vehicle had a number at the back, but as we had not used the same ones on our many trips round the city, the men had not noted each other's numbers when we set out that evening.

We did not discover that we had lost each other until only two of us arrived at the ferry which was to take us down the open water where the steamer was lying. That ferry had to go without us. The next one was the last for that day and would leave in an hour.

There was a moment of complete confusion of mind. Inwardly, questions broke like waves in a storm. Fortunately we quickly reached the only sensible conclusion.

We stood under our umbrellas and prayed to Him, who knew where the others were, asking Him to guide them. There was any number of places to which they might be taken. After a while the other two arrived, but not the ricksha with the luggage.

Instead of going with the three to the steamer, I had to give them quick instructions as to how to manage on board a steamer full of Chinese who would not be able to understand them and whose talk would be unintelligible, especially important was the matter of drinking water.

It was eleven o'clock. I stood there wondering what I should do and felt strongly urged to take a ricksha back to the Mission Home. On the way back I kept looking out for the man with the luggage, but never caught sight of him. My heart held only one prayer; "Lord, what wilt Thou do now for Thy children, who need their suitcases for their journey?"

I reached the house at 11.30. At the same moment a policeman arrived, and seeing me about to enter he said he wished to go in too, to ask if anyone there had lost a ricksha full of suitcases. He soon heard the story. He told me that the police had found a man with a ricksha of luggage who did not know where he was supposed to be going.

"Where are the things now?"

They were at a certain police station and it would take about three hours to fetch them from there and then to the steamer.

"Can I take them out now?"

"No, the office is closed for the night, but it will open tomorrow at 5 a.m.

I was given a paper to say that he had contacted me, and he departed. It was 11.45. Suddenly the thought came; "Phone the steamer."

True, it would be comforting to know that the suitcases were found. I called the number, and heard my own voice asking when the boat was due to leave.

"Unfortunately, we have engine trouble which must be repaired, but we expect to leave tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock."

In my joy I forgot to send the message about the suitcases. I was too happy to sleep and was off by 4 o'clock next morning. My heart was full of thankfulness to our Father in heaven, who has a way of escape for His children in times of trouble, even when the trouble is caused by their own stupidity.

The office was open, and soon the suitcases were standing before me on the counter. The story of the previous evening was repeated.

"The keys?"

"They are with the owners on board the steamer."

"What is in the cases?"

I had not seen their contents, I replied, but I told them what I thought they contained.

Inside the counter there was much discussion as to whether I was to be given the suitcases or not. Outside the counter someone was standing reminding the Lord: "They are Thy children, Lord, and Thou knowest how they need this luggage." They gave me the suitcases in exchange for a receipt on which I was to write my name and address "in my own handwriting."

Full of joy and gladness I proceeded to the steamer with the suitcases. When I arrived they had already taken in the gangway, but the luggage was hauled on board. The three young missionaries had been standing at the rail looking out for their things all the morning, but by this time they had gone below, so they were called up on deck. It was a glorious surprise for them, and at the same time a glorious proof of God's care of His children. □

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God used Marie Monsen, a quiet, humble Norwegian missionary, as one of His chief instruments for revival in China in the early twentieth century. For several years, the Lord led her through bandit-infested territories as she sought to share the Word of God with the Chinese.

Through prayer, God kept her from falling into wicked hands until she was ready to go through the experience to the glory of her Master.

Her book, ***A Present Help Standing on the Promises of God***, from which the above story is one of the testimonies of how God brought deliverance from or through her experiences by His presence and His promises. □



Please join us in a  
**Nine-Day Novena to  
Saint Joseph**  
which begins on March 10  
and ends on March 18, 2022.

## SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

### WHEN WE ARE IN A HURRY AND GOD IS NOT

BY VICTOR H. ARANETA

The Lord operates according to his timetable, not ours. "His ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)



There is a battle that takes place when we pray. Saint Paul's admonition says, "we need to put on our full battle gear." (Ephesians 6:11-18). The enemy will create a vacuum that eats us alive and puts God's ability to provide what we want, in question. It seems like God is put in a defensive mode and us being His creation is asking

Him the BIG "WHY"? Saint Paul taught us that we must always rejoice, pray unceasingly and give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ's Jesus." (Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Our learning process of waiting is being tested when we think that God is taking His sweet time. Our prayer starts to change, and we doubt if God is even listening. We should start looking at ourselves and give in to God's will. Remember, even His begotten Son waited for His answer when He was asked three times if it is possible for the cup of salvation be passed from Him (Matthew 26:39). Then the Father answered "NO."

Let us be prepared like our Lord Jesus that the answer to what we ask from God may not be what we expect to resolve our circumstances.

**Prayer:** Father, let me wait with love and that whatever You have in store for me is what You want me to be. Teach me to have complete acceptance of Your will. Let me be prepared to look at the situation as Your loving embrace that is good for my soul and spirit, in Jesus, I pray. AMEN. ☐

## Upcoming Events

### 1<sup>ST</sup> FRIDAY DEVOTION

MARCH 4, 2022

IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS BEGIN AT 9:30 PM

IN LAS VEGAS:  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT 2:30 PM  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

### 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION

MARCH 5, 2022

IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM  
MASS BEGINS AT 10:00 AM

IN LAS VEGAS:  
CENACLE VIA ZOOM AT 11:00 AM  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT 1:00 PM  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

### 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY DEVOTION

MARCH 6, 2022

IN LOS ANGELES:  
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS BEGIN  
AT 10:30 AM

IN LAS VEGAS:  
ST. SHARBEL CATHOLIC CHURCH  
MASS AT 9:30 AM FOLLOWED BY  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT THE CHAPEL

### 2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

MARCH 19, 2022

IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM  
MASS AT 10:00 AM

IN LAS VEGAS: 6:00 AM  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

### SEEKING GOD'S GLORY THROUGH MARY'S HELP

A NINE-DAY PILGRIMAGE  
QUEBEC CITY | MONTREAL | NEW  
FRANKEN | HUBERTUS | LA CROSSE  
OCTOBER 12-20, 2022

DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER  
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG)

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR LENT

- Ask God, every day, "What about my life makes you happy?" Yes, when God looks at your life, some parts of it — perhaps many aspects of it — bring joy to God's heart. Think of how your children or grandchildren or other people close to you make you happy. God is in relationship with you, which means that your sins grieve God's heart, but also that your growth and love and freedom and kindness bring joy to God of the universe. Again, you will probably need to pray this a few times before you are willing to consider that you give God pleasure, that you make God happy in any way. Stick with this little prayer and keep listening.
- Tell God, and yourself, every day, "I want to be open to the graces of this Lenten season." Maybe you're not open right now, or you're not as open and willing as you'd like to be or think you should be. What else is new? We can always open our lives a bit more, let go of more stuff, listen better, and do more quickly and passionately what we know helps nurture God's kingdom on earth.

This is a beginning: three short and simple prayer starters to ready yourself for the holy season. □

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Vinita Hampton Wright serves as managing editor of the trade books department of Loyola Press. She has written various fiction and non-fiction books, including the novel *Dwelling Places* with Harper One, *Days of Deepening Friendship* and *The Art of Spiritual Writing* for Loyola Press, and most recently, *Small Simple Ways: An Ignatian Daybook for Healthy Spiritual Living*. Vinita is a student and practitioner of Ignatian spirituality, and from 2009 to 2015 she blogged at *Days of Deepening Friendship*. For the past few years, she has co-led small groups through the 19th Annotation of the *Spiritual Exercises*. She lives in Chicago with her husband, three cats, and a dog. In her "spare" time these days, she is working on her next novel.



***"I am your Mother Mary.***

***Pray, pray, my children, for God hears your prayers from His throne. Many who believe in God will be accused and be silenced. Evangelize and preach the Gospel, my children. Do not worry about being persecuted.***

***Offer your sufferings for the poor souls in purgatory. I will be with you in your trying times.***

***Offer your sufferings for the poor souls in purgatory. I will be with you in your trying times.***

***Mary, Your Mother of Mercy***

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***Many have transgressed from My precepts and despised and ignored My presence, especially by those in power. My hands are now being on the side of justice which many people clamor for. Blessings will come and you my children must make the right choice. It is time to fight for that choice. My angels and my Mother Mary are prepared to help.***

***My essence of Godhead is mercy and forgiveness but corruption and deceit prevail in all countries, especially in the country I blessed and love.***

***Pray before the presence of My Body and Blood and open your heart and invoke My passion before God the Father.***

***Jesus of Nazareth, your Loving and Merciful God***

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