

## The Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*"I set before you here, this day, a blessing and a curse."*

### **Salesian Perspective**

Today's first reading is taken from the Book of Deuteronomy (a word meaning "repetition of the law") which is the last book of the Pentateuch. The historical context of Deuteronomy finds Moses and the Israelites in the territory of Moab in the area where the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea. As his final act at this important moment of transferring leadership to Joshua, Moses delivers what is essentially his farewell address or sermon to prepare the Israelites for their entrance into Canaan: Moses challenges the people to remain faithful to the God who has been faithful to them as they literally stand on the edge of taking possession of the "Promised land."

This "Promised Land" is not a "free-for-all." It comes with a price. After everything that God has done to save his people God expects the Israelites to make good use of this promise by "obeying the commandments of the Lord" and to refrain from following strange gods: the former a blessing; the latter, a curse. (*For a more extensive listing of the curses and blessings outlined by Moses, see chapters 27 and 28!*) In this respect the "Promised Land" is less of a geographic place and more a matter of personal choice: deliberately choosing how to live one's life; deliberately choosing how to use the gifts of God; deliberately choosing how to relate to oneself; deliberately choosing how to relate to others. The results of these choices (whether we realize it or not) produce blessing or curse.

Not unlike the "Promised Land," Mount Calvary is not merely a geographic place either: Mount Calvary is, too, a matter of personal choice. It is the ultimate icon of how Jesus chose to be a blessing in the lives of others through his "obeying the commandments of the Lord" before taking possession of that even greater "Promised Land" for himself and for all of us: eternal life. In the closing chapter of his Treatise on the Love of God, Francis de Sales wrote: "Mount Calvary is the mount of lovers. All love that does not take its origin from the Savior's passion is foolish and perilous. Unhappy is death without the Savior's love; unhappy is love without the Savior's death... Upon Calvary we cannot have life without love, or love without the Redeemer's death. Except there, all is either eternal death or eternal love. All Christian wisdom consists in choosing rightly." (Book XII, Ch. 13)

Eternal death, or eternal love? Curse, or blessing? Just today, which do you promise to choose: for yourself, and/or for others?

Rev. Michael S. Murray, OSFS, is the Executive Director of the De Sales Spirituality Center.

### Music for Sunday's Liturgy:

**Entrance:** # 615 Amazing Grace - vs. 1, 2 & 3

**Gloria:** #47 Glory Be

**Psalm:** "Lord, be my rock of safety." (chant)

**Alleluia:** #10 Celtic Alleluia

**Preparation:** # 542 Here I Am, Lord

**Communion:** # 521 Look Beyond

**Song of Praise:** # 575 Only This I Want

**Recessional:** # 616 How Can I Keep from Singing  
- vs. 1 & 2

*All other sung Mass parts are from Mass of Creation*

### Liturgical Ministers

#### Ministers of Hospitality

Donna Marie, Tony Bisantz

**Lectors:** Bob Rinda

#### Eucharistic Ministers:

Kathleen Jepson, John Rice, Nancy Rinda

**Sacristan:** Volunteer

#### Cantors and Song Leaders:

Linda Browning and Dave Greider

### *Mass Intentions for the Week*



*So that they and their families may be remembered in prayer by the community.*

**March 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm**

✠ **In memory of Cliff Morrow**

*Requested by Joe & Lorriane Kurpiel*

**March 11<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am**

✠ **In memory of Cliff Morrow**

*Requested by Arlene Richards*

### Flowers this Sunday



The altar flowers were donated

By: Cay Carcich

In loving memory of her mother

Miss Lucy Rerecich

# Thankyou

### In Honor of Cay Carcich

**TODAY** immediately after mass  
in the Social Hall the church  
community would like to show

Cay Carcich how much we

appreciate **ALL** that she has done

through the years. In about 2

weeks Cay will be moving to Cary, NC.

Cay you will be dearly missed.



The Reading for today's Mass are found in the **Glory & Praise** at number **824**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** ~ Deuteronomy 11:18, 26 – 28, 32

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** ~ Romans 3:21 – 25, 28

**Gospel Reading** ~ Matthew 7:21 – 27

### The "Little Black Book"

Once again this year, we have available copies of the Lenten seasonal prayer reflection booklet entitled, "The Little Black Book." We have them for adults and children in English and for adults in Spanish. These are published by the Diocese of Saginaw and contain helpful daily entries to serve as an aid to prayer.

Anyone interested in a copy of "The Little Black Book" (Lent 2011 edition) will be available after Mass in the vestibule today. **Limited supply available.**



**Ash Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>** we will be celebrating 2 Masses, one at 8:30 am and the second one will be at 7:00 pm.

### Please Pray For The Sick of the Parish

**Ruegue por:** **Please Remember:** in your prayers all those on our **Parish Prayer List**, especially Richard Bacik, Jean Belcher, Robbie Bendula, Jim Benton, Jim & Linda Carolan, Stephen & Phyllis Dyer, Carrie Easley, Joe Gallagher, Keith Gardner, Delores Gilliken, Stephen Hissey, TQ Lewis, Grey McDowell, Donna Midgett, Elizabeth Moffit, Ella Newmiller, Paul O'Neal, Joseph Obringer, Carol Oliver, Mackey Peele, Pat Rice, Ann Styron, Mary Van Severen, Clyde Stowe, Regina Torreblanca, Megan Vayette, Kelly Willis, also the caregivers, homebound, hospitalized & those in special needs.

*Please let Fr. Bob know when a parishioner or family member is in the hospital or homebound. He would appreciate the opportunity to visit and offer his services. Also if you would like a Eucharistic Minister to visit you at home during an illness or when unable to attend Mass, please call Fr. Bob 252-995-6613 or Anita 252-995-7892.*

### If you can Bake, Bring IT!!!

Help make our Palm Sunday Bake Sale a rousing *success!*

Anyone (you too guys!) who can bake, please contact Dee Morrow at 995-6210 and let her know that you will bring your baked goods to the Bake Sale on Palm Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.



### We Take Request ~ Book of Prayer Intentions



Our church family can now make prayer requests by way of our Book of Prayer Intentions, which is provided specifically for that purpose. The dark blue book is in back of the nave near the baptismal font. Just write your intentions in it, and they will be remembered during the Prayer of the Faithful at our Sunday Masses. "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving make your requests known to God." -Philippians 4:6

### Do YOU Know Someone who could use help?

#### 2011 Newman House Mission Trip

The John Newman Association (JNA) is a group of students from Millersville University, Millersville, PA, who gather to socialize, pray, and do service projects. The JNA has a variety of events throughout the year. They are a Catholic Christian organization; however, their students come from all faiths and walks of life!



The JNA organizes a variety of service opportunities. Through there **Be the One** program the students practice service outreach in their local community by working with charities and performing service projects: working at a soup kitchen, an AIDS hospice, a women's shelter and many other opportunities.

On their "2011 Spring Break" this year they want to spend part of their break helping others in need and giving of their time and talent for the service of others here on Hatteras Island.

Under the direction of Father Tcheou, the Campus Minister and the Newmanites, they will be working Thursday to Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>.



Their day will be broken down into 4 sessions. During these sessions, if you or someone you know needs any yard work, house work, repairs, etc., either for your own property or for the surrounding neighbors, **please contact Anita** by e-mail [olssecretary@aol.com](mailto:olssecretary@aol.com) no later than March 7<sup>th</sup> We will need their name, phone number and the physical address of any parishioners or island residents who could use a little help.



*When traveling and you need to know where the closes Catholic Church and the times for their masses please check out [masstimes.org](http://masstimes.org)*

## **Bishop's Annual Appeal 2011**

Our Gifts. Our Call. Our Mission.  
This is our theme for the 2011  
Bishop's Annual Appeal. Saint Teresa  
of Avila said, "Yours are the eyes  
through which Christ looks with  
compassion on the world; yours are  
the feet with which He walks to do

good." The Bishop's Annual Appeal reminds us that  
Our Lord Jesus does indeed act in and through us.  
Prayerfully consider your support for the BAA.  
If you care, pledging your gift over 6 months will  
allow you to be as generous as you wish while  
managing payments.

*The Total Diocesan Goal for 2011 is \$6,337,825.00*  
*Our Parish Goal is \$9,473.00 with 100% participation.*  
*As of February 28, a total of \$5355.00 has been  
collected from 19 pledge cards that have been  
completed.*

### **Hatteras Island Food Pantry**



The Hatteras Island Food Pantry continues to  
see an increased number of families this  
winter. The drop box on the social hall porch  
is available year round for your convenience.  
Please add a few items each time you shop.

Items on sale, coupons, or simply "one extra" of your  
family's favorite foods are a quick ways to help. You  
may give items to form a meal such as spaghetti sauce  
and noodles, pancake mix and syrup, peanut butter and  
jelly, etc.

Since the size of the families accessing the food pantry  
varies, please avoid bulk sized items.

#### **URGENT NEEDS:**

- Canned meats, fish and stews
- Cereals – hot and cold
- Cooking oil, flour, sugar

#### **Items Commonly Needed by the Food Pantry**

- Basic foodstuffs – flour, sugar, coffee, tea,  
rice, pasta, cooking oil
- Canned vegetables – beets, tomatoes and  
greens are local favorites
- Peanut butter
- Personal care items – toothpaste,  
toothbrushes, shampoo, razors
- Cleaning products, including dish and  
laundry detergent
- Paper products

Tax deductible monetary gifts are also appreciated. Mail  
to: Methodist Men/Hatteras Island Food Pantry, PO Box  
1591, Buxton NC 27920

***Thank you for your generosity!***

## **A Lovely Memento...**


Our parish's beautiful limited-edition fine art prints that  
you see on the cover of this bulletin make lovely  
remembrances of your wedding, anniversary  
celebration, child's baptism, or vacation. "The  
Welcoming Light of Our Lady of the Seas" is signed  
and numbered by the artist - Linda Browning, our  
guitarist/song leader. Each print comes sleeved, backed,  
and ready to frame in a 12"x16" mat. Price: \$39.50.  
Proceeds go towards our debt reduction. Please see  
Linda after Mass if you would like her to personalize  
your print for you. Thank you!

### **~Cinderella's Closet~**

**When:** April 13, 2011

**Where:** Our Lady of the Seas Social Hall

**Time:** 6 pm - 8 pm

The night is hosted by Locomotion   
for the any high-school girls that  
would like to join their \*Fairy Godmothers\* in the quest  
to find just the right dress and accessories to attend the  
prom in grand style while not breaking the bank. ***All  
ladies from the community are invited to attend as they  
will make the night sparkle and shine while helping  
the teens choose their attire.***

For more information about the night or to sign-up to  
help, contact Kathy Kiddy at Locomotion's Changing  
Tide Thrift Shop located at 47661 Hwy. 12 Buxton,  
NC or call (252) 995-6010.

***We need dresses, shoes, jewelry and accessories as well  
as food and drinks for the night, after all, this will be a  
GRAND party for the gals before the ball.***

### **Food coupons for the Military**



Any manufactures' coupons from the  
Sunday paper can be sent to the Navy-  
Marine Corps Relief Society. This will

help our military families overseas with living expenses.  
We would appreciate any help from our community family  
by cutting out coupons you don't use and place them in the  
basket in the vestibule. GaeAnn Gessner will take on the  
task of mailing them out weekly.

If our visitors are interested in helping, the address is:  
N.M.C.R.S.

875 N. Randolph Street  
Suite 225  
Arlington, VA 22203.

***Thank you for your support.***



"Almighty God, we stand before You, asking  
for Your divine mercy and protection.

Embrace with Your invincible amour our  
loved ones in all branches of the service. Give them the  
courage and strength against all enemies, both spiritual  
and physical, and hasten their safe journey back to their  
homes and families. Amen." *Please, also remember  
those killed or wounded and their families, friends and  
acquaintances.*

**Catholic Speakers** coming to area College campuses (Duke, UNC, NC State) in the Diocese of Raleigh. Feb. 28: Michael Pakaluk (Professor of Philosophy at Ave Maria University); Apr. 7: Alfred Freddoso (John and Jean Oesterle Chair of Thomistic Studies at the University of Notre Dame). This speaker series, provided by the Thomas International Center, is a wonderful opportunity to hear Catholic scholars on matters impacting the public square. All lectures are free and open to the public. For more information contact Robert Jones, Office of Evangelization. Email: [Rob.Jones@raldioc.org](mailto:Rob.Jones@raldioc.org) or Phone: 919/821-9740

### **Marriage Encounter Weekends**



are designed to give married couples the opportunity to privately examine their lives together . . . a time to share their feelings, their hopes, disappointments, joys and frustrations . . . and to do so openly and honestly in a heart-to-heart loving encounter with the one person they have chosen to live with for the rest of their life. Attend the May 20-22nd weekend in Raleigh. Register online at <http://wwmes4.org> or contact Bill & Elizabeth Nickles for more info call 704-469-3866 or go to [wmandbethnickles@hotmail.com](mailto:wmandbethnickles@hotmail.com)

**Family Honor: Real Life, Real Love Attention All Families with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders!** Need ideas for talking to your child about chastity, sexuality, dating, marriage and other important topics? **GET HOPE, TOOLS and a PLAN with Family Honor's Real Love & Real Life program!** This program is for parents and their 7th or 8th grade son or daughter and helps families build communication and anticipate and deal with the challenges of adolescence. **Topics include:** self-worth, fertility appreciation, peer pressure, real love, developing values, and much more. This fun, interactive, and informative family program will be hosted by **St. Andrew the Apostle, Apex in April: Sessions 1 & 2: Saturday, April 9, 9:00 – 2:15 pm Sessions 3 & 4: Saturday, April 16, 9:00 – 2:15 pm** All sessions are for parents and children. The total cost is \$45 per family and includes lunch. To register, contact Kati Rodgers at (919) 362-0685 or [jym@saintandrew.org](mailto:jym@saintandrew.org). **Registration deadline is MARCH 26.** To learn more about Family Honor, visit [www.familyhonor.org](http://www.familyhonor.org).



*Visitors ~ our pews have envelopes in the pockets for your convenience, which you may take with you and mail back to us. Please mark the box if the donation should be for Parish Needs or Debt Reduction. Thank you for being with us.*

### **LOOK on the back of the bulletin!**

We are able to provide this bulletin each week, without cost to the parish because of the advertisers. Please patronize our advertisers. **To advertise your business and support the church please call Dee Printing at (800)292-9020**

### **Fan the Diocese of Raleigh**



The Diocese is now on Facebook! Through this new form of communication, the Diocesan Facebook page is intended to share stories, photos and videos from across Eastern North Carolina. Also, the Diocesan website, [www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org), now allows you to share news stories to your personal Facebook and Twitter pages and to easily email and print news stories.

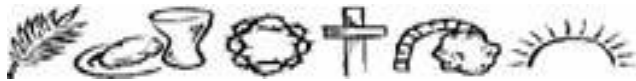


**Bishop Burbidge on Twitter** – Bishop Burbidge is now posting regular reflections, news and updates on Twitter. You are invited to follow him @bishopburbidge.

**Catholic Perspective** Lenten practices and ways to enrich one's prayer life are the topics of **Catholic Perspective** for the coming week. The program reviews the important aspects of the Lenten season, offering suggestions on ways to carry out the Lenten practices of prayer, penitence and almsgiving. The Diocese of Raleigh's weekly television program is available on many Time-Warner Cable Channels in the Diocese and is posted each week on the Diocesan website. Catholic Perspective airs in Raleigh on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. on Cable Channel 22; in Durham on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. on Cable Channel 8; in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough on Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m. on Cable Channel 8; and in Greenville on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. on Cable Channel 69. The program will air on the Time-Warner Faith on Demand Channel in Craven, New Hanover, Brunswick, Onslow and Pender Counties, allowing viewers to watch at any time during the week. Watch for further weekly updates on Catholic Perspective programming in your parish bulletin and on our Diocesan website at [www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org).

**A Lenten Journey** Lent is a wonderful time to contemplate the mystery not only of Christ's redemption two thousand years ago, but also of His presence in our lives today. Enrich your Lenten experience this year by joining the faithful from across the Diocese of Raleigh on pilgrimage with the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Raleigh to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, April 1 and 2, 2011. The Basilica is the largest Roman Catholic church in the United States and North America and is home to over 70 chapels and oratories. Fulfilling its mission, the Basilica is a special place of worship, pilgrimage, evangelization and reconciliation. To register or for more information about this spiritual event contact your Parish Pilgrimage Promoter, visit the Diocesan website: [www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org)

Project Rachel Support Group\_ Abortion is one of the most common procedures in the US, experienced by millions of women, many of whom are Catholic. Abortion creates a wound in post -abortive woman, (and men) resulting in spiritual and emotional problems. The Project Rachel ministry assists women and men who have been wounded by abortion to find truth and healing. There is a support group beginning in the Triangle area in late January. If you have experienced an abortion and would like more information about the support group, contact Project Rachel at (919) 852-1021 or email [projectrachel@nc.rr.com](mailto:projectrachel@nc.rr.com). For more information go to <http://projectrachelnc.org/> (website) Calls and appointments are kept strictly confidential.



### Schedule for Easter

April 21st	Holy Thursday 7:00 pm
April 22nd	Good Friday 7:00 pm
April 23rd	Holy Saturday
	Ocracoke Island 4:00 pm
	OLS Church 8:00 pm
April 24th	Easter Sunday 9:00 am & 11:00 am
April 24th	Spanish 5:30 pm



### Horario de Semana Santa

Abril 21	Jueves Santo 7 pm
Abril 22	Viernes Santo 7 pm
Abril 23	Sabado Santo Vigilia Pascual 8 pm
Abril 23	Sabado
	Ocracoke 4 pm Misa Resurreccion
<b>Abril 24, Domingo de Pascua</b>	<b>Misa en español 5:30 pm.</b> Por la mañana domingo de Pascua misa a las 9 y 11 horas.

Una vez mas están disponibles gratuitamente los libritos para el tiempo de Cuaresma. Son reflexiones para este tiempo litúrgico y los hay en español para adultos y para niños. Los publica la Diócesis de Saginaw MI. Tienen meditaciones para cada día de Cuaresma. Los encontraras en el atrio de la iglesia y son de tapa negra. Llevaté uno para leer en casa en familia.

## NOVENO DOMINGO EN EL TIEMPO ORDINARIO (Marzo 6, 2011)

### Enfasis Sugerido

*“Yo les entrego ahora, en este día, una bendición y una maldición”.*

### Perspectiva Salesiana

La primera lectura de hoy ha sido tomada del Libro del Deuteronomio (una palabra que significa “repetición de la ley”) que es el último libro del Pentateuco. El contexto histórico del Deuteronomio nos muestra a Moisés y los Israelíes en el territorio de Moab, el área donde el río Jordán desemboca en el Mar Muerto. En este acto final, en ese momento tan importante en que transfiere el liderazgo a Josué, Moisés ofrece lo que en esencia se convertirá en su discurso de despedida, el sermón para preparar a los Israelíes para su entrada en Canaán. Moisés reta al pueblo a que continúen siendo fieles al Dios, quien ha sido fiel con ellos, y más aún en ese momento en que están literalmente al borde de poseer la “Tierra Prometida”.

Esta “Tierra Prometida” no es “gratis para todos”. Viene con un precio. Después de todo lo que Dios ha hecho para salvar a su pueblo, EL espera que ellos hagan buen uso de la promesa de “obedecer los mandamientos del Señor”, y abstenerse de seguir a dioses extraños: el primero una bendición, el segundo una maldición. (*Para obtener una lista más extensa de las maldiciones y las bendiciones como fueron explicadas por Moisés, vean los capítulos 27 y 28*). En ese respecto “la Tierra Prometida” no es tanto un punto geográfico, sino más bien una cuestión de elección personal: escoger deliberadamente cómo vivir nuestra vida; escoger deliberadamente cómo utilizar los dones de Dios; escoger deliberadamente cómo relacionarnos con nosotros mismos; escoger deliberadamente cómo relacionarnos con los demás. Los resultados de estas elecciones (ya sea que nos demos cuenta o no) generan bendiciones o maldiciones.

Al igual que “la Tierra Prometida”, el Monte del Calvario no es sólo un punto geográfico: El Monte del Calvario también representa un asunto de elección personal. Es el último símbolo de cómo Jesús escogió ser una bendición en las vidas de los demás, al optar por “obedecer los mandamientos del Señor” antes de tomar posesión de esa otra grandiosa “Tierra Prometida” para sí mismo, y para todos nosotros: la de la vida eterna. En el último capítulo de su Tratado del Amor de Dios Francisco de Sales escribió: “El Monte del Calvario es el monte de los amantes. Todo amor cuyo origen no sea la pasión del Salvador, es insensato y peligroso. La muerte sin el amor del Salvador es infeliz; el amor sin la

muerte del Salvador es infeliz... Ante el Calvario no podemos tener vida sin amor, o amor sin la muerte del Redentor. A excepción de este lugar, todo lo demás es amor eterno o muerte eterna. Toda la sabiduría Cristiana consiste en saber escoger correctamente” (Libro XII, Cap. 13)

¿Muerte eterna o amor eterno? ¿Maldición o bendición? Al menos por hoy, ¿cuál de las dos prometen escoger para ustedes y/o para los demás?

El Padre Michael S. Murray, OSFS es el Director Principal del Centro Espiritual De Sales.

### **Anuncios (announcement)**

El domingo 6 de marzo a las tres de la tarde habrá en el salón parroquial una plática para todos los interesados en la relación de pareja. Hablara el Sr. José Mendoza del Ministerio Hispano. La plática será seguida de la Misa en español a las 5.30. Estamos tratando de organizar una guardería infantil para esa tarde. Te esperamos.

*Por favor comuníquese al padre Bob cuando un feligrés o un miembro de su familia está en el hospital o enfermo en casa. El padre Bob querría tener la oportunidad de visitar a los enfermos y de ofrecerles sus servicios.*

**Un Viaje de Cuaresma** La Cuaresma es un tiempo maravilloso para contemplar no solo el misterio de la redención de Cristo hace dos mil años, sino también la de Su presencia en nuestras vidas hoy en día. Enriquezca su experiencia cuaresmal este año al unirse a los fieles de toda la Diócesis de Raleigh en la peregrinación con el Reverendísimo Michael F. Burbidge, Obispo de Raleigh, a la Basílica del Santuario Nacional de la Inmaculada Concepción de Washington, DC, el 1 y 2 de abril, 2011. La Basílica es la Iglesia Católica más grande en los Estados Unidos y de Norte América, y es el hogar de más de 70 capillas y oratorios. Además de realizar su misión, la Basílica es un lugar especial de culto, peregrinación, evangelización y reconciliación. Para registrarse o para obtener más información sobre este evento espiritual, comuníquese con el promotor de la peregrinación de su parroquia, visite el sitio Web Diocesano: [www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org)

### **Miércoles de Ceniza (Marzo 9, 2011)**

#### **Perspectiva Salesiana**

La Cuaresma es un tiempo en el que cada uno de nosotros recibe un reto: que reconozcamos nuestra

necesidad de conversión. La invitación que recibimos es para que examinemos más de cerca nuestra relación con Dios, con nosotros mismos, y con los demás. Dicho de forma más simple, la Cuaresma nos llama a reconocer los pecados, vicios, debilidades—todo aquello— que no permite que la dignidad divina que Dios nos ha dado, se haga realidad en nuestros pensamientos, en nuestras palabras, y en nuestros actos.

Para esta travesía interna, se ha popularizado un ritual que principalmente se basa en “abstenernos” de hacer ciertas cosas durante la Cuaresma. Habrá algunos de ustedes que dejarán de fumar tabaco, otros evitarán el alcohol, y otros tantos renunciarán a comer postres. En resumen, dejamos de hacer algo que normalmente disfrutaríamos.

Dicho en un lenguaje tradicional, la Cuaresma es un tiempo para ayunar.

Francisco de Sales no fue ajeno al ayuno, o al concepto de la “privación”, durante la Cuaresma. El aprobaba que las personas hicieran ayuno, siempre y cuando este cumpliera con tres condiciones.

*Primero*, nuestro ayuno “debe ser íntegro y universal”. Nuestra “abstinencia” no puede estar limitada a privar nuestras bocas de alimento, bebida, u otros manjares. Francisco insiste en que, entre otras cosas, debemos privar nuestros ojos de todo aquello que sea “frívolo” y malsano. Debemos negar a nuestros oídos las conversaciones “pueriles”, y todo tipo de habladurías. Debemos negar a nuestra lengua todo tipo de palabras que sean utilizadas para calumniar, acusar, o injuriar. Debemos evitar los “pensamientos inútiles, los recuerdos triviales, y todos esos apetitos y deseos superfluos”, propios de nuestra voluntad. *Segundo*, el ayuno no debe hacerse para satisfacer la curiosidad de los demás. Por el contrario, el propósito de nuestra “privación” es que sea Dios quien la examine. *Tercero*, todos nuestros actos, incluyendo el ayuno, deben tener como objetivo “complacer solamente a Dios, a quien debemos todo el honor y toda la gloria”.

Aún así, el ayuno es solamente una parte de la historia. ¡La Cuaresma es también es una temporada para celebrar!

En su libro Un Sentido de Sexualidad (Doubleday 1989) los doctores Evelyn y James Whitehead nos recuerdan que “el ayuno en su máxima expresión, no es un acto puramente ni de castigo ni de abstinencia. Nosotros no ayunamos solamente para evitar el mal, sino también para recuperar los bienes olvidados”. Dicho de otra forma, “el ‘no’ del ayuno es fructífero, sólo cuando encierra un ‘sí’ de un profundo valor para nuestra vida”.

La rigurosa disciplina de la festividad complementa nuestro ayuno; necesitamos tener algo por lo cual ayunamos.

Es correcto. Celebrar requiere tanta disciplina como ayunar. La disciplina en un festín celebra de buena forma, y efusivamente, las bendiciones de Dios, sin dejarse llevar por el egoísmo y los excesos.

La Cuaresma entonces se trata más de “hacer” que de “prescindir de”. San Francisco de Sales escribe en su Introducción a la Vida Devota: “Tanto el ayuno como el trabajo nos mortifican y nos disciplinan. Si el trabajo que ustedes hacen contribuye a la gloria de Dios, y a su propio bienestar, yo prefiero mil veces que ustedes aguanten la disciplina del trabajo, y no la del ayuno”. El añade: “Hay personas que conciben el ayuno como algo desagradable, otras consideran desagradable ayudar a los enfermos, otras visitar a los presos, otras escuchar confesiones, otras predicar, otras prestar ayuda a los necesitados, otras orar, otras hacer obras similares. Estas penas tienen tanto valor como las demás”.

Ya sea por medio del ayuno o la celebración, ya sea alejándonos del pecado o aceptando la virtud, estos cuarenta días de la Cuaresma se tratan de la fuente de nuestras acciones, de lo que llevamos “por dentro”: nuestro corazón, nuestra mente, nuestros pensamientos, sentimientos, actitudes, esperanzas y miedos. Se tratan de la travesía del alma y del espíritu. “Por mi parte,” dice Francisco de Sales, “me parece que deberíamos comenzar con nuestro interior”.

El Padre Michael S. Murray, OSFS es el Director Principal del Centro Espiritual De Sales.

### **Ash Wednesday (March 9, 2011)**

#### **Salesian Perspective**

Lent is a time when each of us is challenged to recognize our need for conversion. We are invited to closely examine our relationship with God, ourselves and one another. Simply put, Lent asks us to name those sins, vices, weaknesses -- anything -- that prevent us from making real in thought, word and deeds our God-given dignity.

A popular way of ritualizing this inner journey is to “give up” something for Lent. Maybe you refrain from tobacco; others eschew alcohol; still others pass up all desserts. In short, we do without something we normally enjoy.

Using traditional language, Lent is a time for fasting.

Francis de Sales was no stranger to fasting or “giving up” for Lent. He endorsed the practice of fasting, provided that it meets three conditions.

*First*, our fasting “should be entire and universal.” Our “giving up” can not be limited to depriving our mouths of food, drink or other treats. Francis insists that, among other things, we should deprive our eyes of things that are “frivolous” and unhealthy: we must deny our ears of “vain” talk or gossip: we should deny our tongue words that slander, accuse or injure: we should give up “useless thoughts, vain memories and all the superfluous appetites and desires” of our will. *Second*, our fasting should not be done for the eyes of others. Rather, our “giving up” is meant to be scrutinized by God. *Third*, all of our actions, including our fasting, serve only “to please God alone, to whom all honor and glory belong.”

Fasting, however, is only half of the story. Lent, in its fullest expression is also a season for feasting!

In their book *A Sense of Sexuality*, (Doubleday 1989) Drs. Evelyn and James Whitehead remind us that “fasting, at its finest, is neither solely punishment nor denial. We fast not only to avoid evils but to recapture forgotten goods.” Put another way, “the ‘no’ of fasting is fruitful only if we have some deeply valued ‘yes’ in our life” The arduous discipline of feasting complements our fasting; we need something for which to fast.

That's right. Feasting requires no less discipline than fasting. The discipline of feasting celebrates well and heartily the God-given blessings that enjoy without engaging in selfishness and excess.

Lent, then, is as much a matter of “doing” as it is “doing without”. St. Francis de Sales writes in his Introduction to the Devout Life: “Both fasting and working mortify and discipline us. If the work you undertake contributes to the glory of God and to your own welfare, I much prefer that you should endure the discipline of working than that of fasting.” He continues: “One person may find it painful to fast, another to serve the sick, to visit prisoners, to hear confessions, to preach, to assist the needy, to pray, and to perform similar exercised. These latter pains have as much value as the former.”

Whether through fasting or feasting, turning away from sin or embracing virtue, these forty days of Lent are about the source of our actions, our “insides”: our heart, mind, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, hopes and fears. It is the journey of the soul and spirit. “As for myself,” says Francis de Sales, “it seems to me that we ought to begin with the interior.”

Rev. Michael S. Murray, OSFS, is the Executive Director of the De Sales Spirituality Center.