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The Church of  
Saint John  
the Evangelist  
Montreal

## EDITORIAL

By TONY WHITEHEAD

Lent is a time of inward looking at our True Beliefs, and when the World seems a totally alien place.

The World has Politicians who promise, never deliver and tell lies as to why they let the people all down. Too many think they are irreplaceable. Bureaucrats ensure that medical programs do not work to the benefit of the patients! While City governments like all other rulers worship money rather than use it for the people who voted them in!

This challenges me to see the value of Prayer each Sunday for these dreadful hypocrites.

Yet every day as I struggle into McGill, I enjoy and am amazed by the kindness and help I receive as I tackle stairs and doors. A sudden hand helps me, and as I say "thank you", I see a smiling face and receive a kind word. People individually are still courteous and helpful. As I arrive at the Office, I am smiling myself and humming a cheerful tune.

This is why St. John's each Sunday is a Joy. The Service - and Coffee - refill us for the week ahead!

The Bible really tells us this: every time God works through the Collective, He is let down. When He works through Individuals, He achieves Miracles. The Greatest being Jesus.

Joyous Easter to all, and Happiness in the Christian Year ahead.

*Tony*



## REFLECTIONS

BY FR. KEITH SCHMIDT

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

It has been a rather long and hard winter. Needless to say, a few days in late February and in early March of spring-like temperatures seems to have put a smile on many people's faces. Even though at times it has seemed as if winter would never give up its grip, the hint of spring gives us all hope, despite the fact that we all know that winter is not behind us yet. It seems as if we can deal with a lot of discouragement as long as we have some glimmer of better things ahead.

The disciples and followers of Jesus were on the brink of losing that hope during Holy Week. They had thought on Palm Sunday that everything would turn out just liked they imagined. Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem. Like a conquering hero, people couldn't get enough of Him. But then things changed. Jesus was arrested, the crowds turned against Him. He stood alone before Pontius Pilate, and He was forced to carry His cross through the streets until He reached Golgotha. Jesus seemed alone now except for His Mother, a few women, and St John. Everyone else was in hiding, afraid and with good reason. What hope could they find in this? Had Jesus been

wrong? Was their hope misplaced?

Then came Easter morning. Just when it seemed all was lost, this incredible scene unfolds - the stone has been rolled away, and the tomb is empty. An angel tells the women not to be afraid, Jesus has risen, and He is not in the tomb. Hope has been restored. The angels also tell Mary Magdalene and the women to go their way and tell His disciples; tell the world what has happened! Let us in our tribulations not be tempted to lose this hope and instead tell the good news of Jesus arisen!

*Keith +*



## A LENTEN REFLECTION

BY MTR. WENDY TELFER

*Be still, and know that I am God.*

*(Psalm 46:10)*

When I was an altar server at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, a humorous article about Anglo-Catholics made the rounds. It was composed of a series of questions, asking what people of this tradition would do when faced with various challenges, ranging from the trivial (one's favourite artisanal gin is out of stock) to the significant (the loss of a loved one). The answer was always the same: go to Mass. The implicit assumption was that Mass was said often enough that the person in crisis could find comfort in the Sacrament on a timely basis.

At St. John the Evangelist, Mass is celebrated every day of the week, and has been for almost the entire history of the parish. Indeed, this practice is such an integral part of our identity that attendance at a weekday service is suggested as a Lenten observance.

To those who are not yet part of the small group who gathers for a half-hour of intimate and meditative worship, I offer both a warm introduction and a

brief description of what awaits you. The congregation of three to ten people, including the priest and server, gather in St. Anne's Chapel, except on Wednesday morning at 7:30 when the memorial altar to the Rector-Founder on the north aisle is used. By comparison to a High Mass, the service is said and not sung, some elements are omitted (hymns, incense, the Gloria and Creed, etc.) while the Epistle and Gospel are often the same passages read on Sunday. A service book, and the text of the Introit and Gradual, are provided so worshipers can



participate in the rite. On Tuesday evening, the Mass is said entirely in French.

It has been my experience that weekday Masses complement the principal Sunday service. They are 'both/and' components of my spiritual life. I find said services

to be peaceful and focussed entirely on prayer. They provide the opportunity to reflect on the Sunday readings again, and perhaps to recall aspects of the sermon. The priest is available to listen to pastoral concerns and to hear confessions in privacy. As well, worship in the early morning or early evening provides a centred way of making the transition between the different times of the day.

The great benefit of taking something on for Lent is that the practice can become a cherished part of our rule of life. I hope and pray that people will be inspired to attend a weekday Mass and hear the call of the psalmist to be still, and to know our God.

Wendy +



## KEEPING LENT BY FR. EZRA PICKUP

As a child, I used to give up candy or movies or snacks for Lent. I couldn't quite see those things were fine to do any other time of the year, but not in Lent.

As a teenager, I began to observe fasting, realizing that it had a connection to the idea that mankind did not depend upon food alone, but upon the Word of God alone, understanding that we must get sustenance for living with meaning and direction from God's Word. That was easier said than done.

As an adult, I have undertaken fasting as well. That of course, do not mean not eating, or drinking water, for forty days. In my own discipline, I eat a vegetarian diet. Combined with the Fast, my own discipline, besides the Daily Offices, has been on Repentance and on readings from the Scriptures and of the Fathers of the Church, and contemporary spiritual writers, for spiritual sustenance. All these disciplines have helped me to prepare for the day of Judgment and, especially the Paschal Mystery in Holy Week and Eastertide.

All of us, including me, are repeat offenders, and must repent endless times. But there will be the Day of Judgment.

If that day of judgment is anything like an event that happened to me one Saturday morning as I was traveling to Rutland from Lydonville, Vermont for a meeting. I was on of US 2. A car pulling a travel trailer was just ahead of me. However, the trailer was not properly loaded; the excess weight weight at the back of the trailer around bends in the road would lift the read end of the car up, which caused the driver to pull into the left land to stabilize the car and trailer.

We were heading down a steep winding hill above the town of Marshfield. Coming up my lane was a car with five young people in it. If I stayed in my lane, there would be a head on collision. I was petrified for an instant, until I made up my mind to crash my own car into the guard post and wires, with the possibility that my car and I might plunge the five hundred or more feet down the embankment. As soon as I made my mind up, all fear left me. But suddenly my entire life passed before my eyes in slow motion. And I felt God's love and His protection. My car, a VW bug, did not break the posts or the wires.

So I am here writing about keeping Lent.

Patriarch Kirill of Russia, had this to say in a sermon he preached in 2013 on the Sunday of the Last Judgment. (Matthew 25. 31-46) "The judge no longer speaks of the Commandments; rather He speaks of deeds. And we know that the list could go on, for it concerns not only the sick, the naked, the hungry, the thirsty, or the prisoners, but also speaks of helping any person... Why does helping another person redeem our own sins? Because it is in this help, and in this ability to accomplish good works, that the greatest of the commandments and the greatest of values is revealed. A person without love in his heart is incapable of doing such things." \*

Ezra +



*Patriarch Kirill in his own Words*, pp. 230-231.  
New York, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press.

## A LATIN PILGRIMAGE THROUGH LENT

BY PETER HARPER



One of the great losses in our Prayer Book is the absence of weekday Eucharistic services which is particularly sad in Lent. Obviously, the Reformers had no great attachment to Lent which emphasizes works over faith.

A few years ago, a friend of the parish David Jones showed me a book called *Roman Pilgrimage* (George Weigel, 2013). It is a companion for the daily Lenten masses which are held in different churches in Rome, the so-called 'station churches', following a tradition going back to the 4th c. We dreamed that we would one day accomplish this 40-day

pilgrimage before we are too old. That was a non-starter, but it gave me an idea. Could I not accomplish the pilgrimage locally (symbolically, just as we do the Stations of the Cross)? But there was a problem – the Masses are now done in Rome according to the modern liturgy and I wanted to do the old Latin masses. Luckily, Latin daily masses are available locally in the RC Latin parish in the old St. Irénée Church on Atwater St. and at the SSPX convent in St. Césaire on the South Shore.

The series of Lenten masses is an amazing, but very old construct, and not always logical. Yet, there is a clear story line generally blending three elements: (1) an Old Testament episode, (2) a New Testament event, and (3) the life of an ancient Roman saint in whose church Mass is celebrated. The original Masses are those of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday which give the theme of the week and were set by the time of Pope St. Gregory the Great (d. 604). That of Tuesday is a fill-in generally on a similar theme and that of Thursday a much later addition (8th c. under Gregory II; there was originally no Mass on that day). The Saturday Mass is more elaborate and ties in with the coming Sunday. Lent is lived as a triple endeavour: a preparation for Easter, an instruction for the catechumens, and a re-conversion of the

faithful. The 40 days reflect both the 40 years of the Exodus and the 40-day fast of Our Lord. My baedekers for this journey were Dom Pius Parsch's *The Church's Year of Grace* (1953) and the last of the great Pre-Vatican II missals by Jesuit Fr. J. Feder, *Missel quotidien des fidèles* (1955). So off I went.

### Three Sundays of Pre-Lent

Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima are known as the weeks of Adam (the Fall), of Noah (the Salvation through water), and of Abraham (the Sacrifice), based on the Scripture readings at Matins, and each is associated with an alliance with God as the three are figures of Christ. The services are traditionally held in sequence in three Roman basilicas, St. Lawrence Without, St. Paul Without, and St. Peter, emphasising their increasing importance. The 'Alleluia' is put to rest for 70 days till Easter, because the children of Israel in their 70 years of the Babylonian Exile did 'not sing the songs of Sion'. It is a time of sadness – 'The sorrows of death compass me'. The readings are the same as ours.

**Septuagesima** is an appeal to the task ahead (vocation). The epistle uses the image of the race to win the crown, while the Gospel tells the parable of the vineyard in which all are called to labour

differently for the same reward. **Sexagesima** details this task (instruction), as Paul recalls his own travails and the parable of the sower outlines the work to be done, that is to receive and nurture the seed of the Word of God. **Quinquagesima** points to the goal to be reached (revelation): we are on our way with Christ to Jerusalem to receive the illumination (the cure of the blind man), the vision of God which Paul says only charity can allow.

### Four Days of Preparation

**Ash Wednesday** at St. Sabina marks the solemn beginning of Lent and the imposition of ashes recalls our sinful condition, hence our condemnation to death. The ancient readings of Joel on penitence and Matthew on fasting have survived into later liturgies including our own. The three following days were not part of the original Lent which began on the Sunday. The **Thursday** Mass is about prayer – Hezekiah's plea for his health and for the safety of Jerusalem and the centurion's petition for his servant (at St. George, the protector soldier). The **Friday** is about love towards one's neighbour, both from Isaiah and St. Matthew (at Saints John and Paul, renowned for their charity). The **Saturday** Mass at St. Augustine is a late addition about

salvation through justice (Isaiah) and by appeal to the Lord (the storm on the lake). Hence, the three exercises of Lent are firmly introduced from the beginning: fasting, prayer, and almsgiving.

### Two Weeks of Resisting the Devil (Defensive)

The **First Sunday in Lent** is at St. John Lateran, the church of the Baptist where Lent now begins and will end on Easter Vigil, stressing the dominant baptismal motif throughout. After His baptism by John, Jesus retires to the desert where He is tempted by the Devil. The resistance to the Devil is the dominant theme of the first two weeks and fasting and self-discipline are seen as the important weapons of opposition. The Epistle stresses the need to choose between the two ways.

On **Monday**, the Good Shepherd both in Ezekiel and in the Gospel is an encouragement to get going (at St. Peter in Vincula, the chief shepherd). The Ember Days are celebrated this week and they develop the theme of Moses and Elijah also fasting in the desert on **Wednesday** at St. Mary Major (a reference to Mary in the Gospel); on **Saturday** in St. Peter's (because of the

ordinations), Christ and the two prophets are joined in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration; the 5 lessons recall God's invitation and covenant and the 5th tells the story of the three children in the furnace of Daniel and includes their canticle. Other minor themes include on **Tuesday** at St. Anastasia (set in a commercial area) a reference to the money-lenders. On **Thursday**, all meet at St. Lawrence's martyr scene and learn of penance, suffering, and inclusion (woman of Canaan). **Friday**, at the Twelve Apostles, stresses penance and reconciliation both by Ezekiel and the Gospel of man suffering of the palsy.

The second **Sunday** at St. Mary in Dominica, the first person to be transfigured, is a repeat of the eve's service with the Transfiguration Gospel. The weekday masses introduce the theme of the coming Passion (announced on **Monday** at St. Clement Martyr before the great mosaic cross) while Daniel in exile takes on the sins of Israel. On **Tuesday**, at St. Balbina, Jesus continues His fight against evil (the Pharisees), while the widow of Sarepta is saved by Elijah because of her faith. Jesus talks again about His passion and its path to glory (to the mother of the sons of Zebedee) on **Wednesday**, as Mordecai in the Book of

Esther pleads for his people at St. Cecilia, the Christian Esther. Suffering and compassion are the theme on **Thursday** (Dives and Lazarus) at St. Mary in Trastevere in the Jewish Quarter, while Jeremiah insists on the need to have faith in God. **Friday** marks a parallel between the murder of the son sent to the vineyard workers as an image of the Passion and of Joseph sold by his brothers at St. Vitalis martyr, while on **Saturday** at St. Marcellinus and Peter, brothers in martyrdom, the story of the prodigal son and his brother is associated with that of Jacob and Esau.

### Two Weeks of Fighting the Devil (Offensive)

The readings for the Third Sunday set the tone for the second fortnight in Lent. At St. Lawrence Without, Paul calls for the rejection of all evil and the Gospel of the 'strong man' describes the arduous fight against the Devil. The weekday Masses are aimed at the instruction of the catechumens who received the commandments on the Wednesday. On **Monday**, at St. Mark, apostle of the Egyptians, they are presented with the images of converted pagans, particularly of the healing of Naaman the Syrian, while Jesus decries the Jews

for their rejection of Him because of His healing of strangers. **Tuesday**, at St. Pudenziana (originally St. Peter's lodging), the theme is about the deliverance of the sons of the widow by Elisha coupled to the power of remitting sins given to the Peter and the Apostles. **Wednesday**, at St. Sixtus, a martyred Pope, the readings are about the commandments revealed to the catechumens both by Moses and by Christ. **Thursday**, at St. Cosmas and Damian, the great physicians, Jeremiah recalls the right attitude to enter the Temple, while Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and others. **Friday**, at St. Lawrence in Lucina, continues of the theme of healing by water, Moses extracting water from the rock, and Jesus conversing with the Samaritan at the well. **Saturday**, at St. Suzanna, two tales of pardon are associated, that of the innocent Suzanna and of the adulterous woman.

The fourth week begins at Holy Cross in Gerusalemme with a joyous and hopeful high point in Lent, Rose Sunday – a parallel to the Transfiguration at the end of the first week – it is an anticipation of the benefits of the Passion – the foundation of the Church (Jerusalem), the mother of us all, and of Christ feeding the multitude. The theme of the mother



church continues on **Monday** at the Four Crowned saints; Solomon remits the contested child to the kind mother, while Jesus cleaning the Temple announces its destruction and the rebuilding of the new Church through the Resurrection. On **Tuesday**, at St. Lawrence in Damaso, Moses acts as mediator in the Golden Calf episode, while Jesus explains His own mission. The two OT lessons on **Wednesday** at St. Paul Without are again about healing, Ezekiel about the new spirit and the heart of flesh and Isaiah about the scarlet sins becoming white as snow, while the Gospel is about Jesus' healing of the blind man at the pool of Siloam and the long discussion which follows. **Thursday**, at St. Sylvester, a Pope, and Martin of Tours (who raised three persons from the dead), parallels the resurrection of the son of the Shunammite by Elisha and Jesus' resurrection of the son of the widow of Nain and **Friday**, at St. Eusebius, built in a graveyard, recalls the parallel stories of the raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath by Elijah, and that of Lazarus by Jesus. All prefigure the resurrection of Jesus. **Saturday**, at St. Nicolas in Carcere (originally at St Lawrence), readings are about the coming promised land of light and water by Isaiah in conjunction with the Gospel of Jesus as light of the world.

## Passiontide

On Passion Sunday at St. Peter, a final chapter opens with a focus on the coming Passion. The crosses (in olden days gem-studded crosses of glory) are now veiled. The themes of the week are Christ's rejection by His people, his appeal to His Father, His death becoming the means of salvation and the faithful acknowledging their sin. On **Sunday**, the coming sacrifice is likened to the high priest entering the sanctuary, while Jesus is accused by the Jews. On **Monday**, at St. Chrysogonus, a soldier martyr, Jonah recalls the saving of Nineveh after their 40-day fast, while Jesus continues to be persecuted as He announces His departure. On **Tuesday**, at St. Cyriacus Pope, Jesus discusses the coming of 'His hour' while His persecution is likened to that of the prophet Daniel. **Wednesday**, at St. Marcellus Pope, includes a final instruction of the catechumens with a summary of God's law from Leviticus, while Jesus continues His controversial defence of His mission and His person. **Thursday**, at St. Appollinaris, disciple of St. Peter, is about penance and the remission of sin, that of the exiled Jews in Babylon in the book of Daniel and that of the woman washing Jesus' feet at the Pharisee's table. On **Friday**, at St. Stephen, the dice are set; the Pharisees in council

decide Jesus' death while Jeremiah lends his own wailing during his own persecution. The **Saturday** Mass at St. John at the Latin Gate is a late addition and continues Jesus' long condemnation by the Pharisees in the Gospel of John, while the lesson depicts the trials of the persecuted prophet Jeremiah.

It is a pious practice on Passion Friday to say the Mass of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, associating Mary with the passion of Her Son. It is a repeat of the feast of September 15 – it is for this Mass that the great sequence, the 'Stabat mater dolorosa' ('At the Cross Her station keeping') was composed.

I was thus ready to return to St. John's for Holy Week where it is done much in the old way, though I sneaked back to

St. Irénée's for some services. In particular, during the Three Holy Days at dawn, three FSSP priests sang the most moving Latin Tenebrae I have ever witnessed with the full breviary tones, psalms, nocturns, and lessons.

**Postscript.** The Latin masses were beautifully done according to the ancient ritual in impeccable, intelligible, and perfectly accentuated Latin, a joy for an old classical scholar's ear. The sanctuary at St. Irénée is spacious, the altar wide and the servers well trained, which make for a perfect High Mass on Sundays. At St. Césaire, the small convent chapel on the second floor is the ideal setting for a Low Mass in the old style as pictured on ancient devotional cards. Both buildings are in late 19th c. Beaux Arts style in good repair.



Illustration by Roland Hui



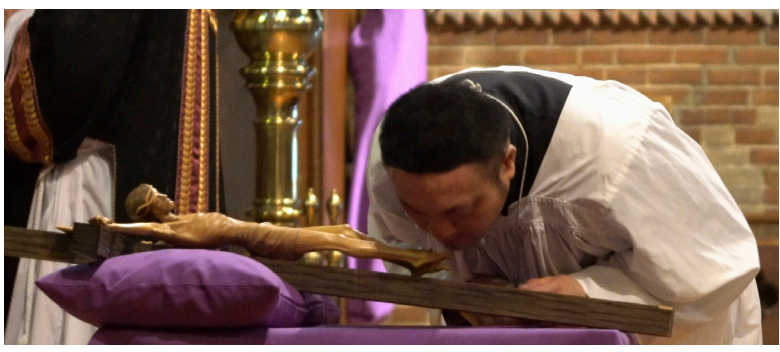
Join us this  
Easter at the  
Red Roof Church!

March 25, Palm Sunday, 10:30 AM  
 March 29, Maundy Thursday, 5:45 PM  
 March 30, Good Friday, 12:00 PM, and Tenebrae, 7:00 PM  
 March 31, Holy Saturday, 8:00 PM  
 April 1, Easter Sunday, 10:30 AM

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