

February 2009

Eagle's Wings

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Weddings & Baptisms
Alumni Chapel
Call Fr. John Maher
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Mass Intentions
are accepted for each
Weekday and Sunday Mass
for \$10 per Mass.
Call 286-8400 or stop by
the office.
They are also listed on our
website.

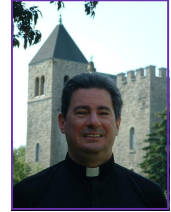
Campus Ministry
Web Page
www.niagara.edu/ministry

Newsletter On-line
from the above website,
click on NEWSLETTER

Mass Schedule
Sunday Masses:
11 am & 10 pm

"Rend your heart, not your garments..."

Joel 2: 13



Lent is a time for turning and re-turning. We greet this season hesitantly and haltingly, a rite of passage from winter to Easter and spring. Life has many times of turning points; some are routine and regular, like change of seasons. Some are significant markers, as they challenge us to face ourselves and decide who we are and who we will become. In Lent, we turn inward to reflect and then upward to God for redemption. By doing this, we embrace what we were created to be: God's beloved sons and daughters.

The quote from the prophet Joel proclaimed on Ash Wednesday reveals Lent's essence: it is an inside job. Lent's outer manifestations; fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, are simply external guideposts on our spiritual journey. Of course, they are there to make us better people. But these outer works only take root and bear fruit if first we take time to reflect and accept one plain truth: that we are loved sinners in need of God's mercy and grace. The psalmist knew with confidence the core of all conversion first begins with total trust in God: "A humbled and contrite heart you will not spurn." (Ps. 51:19)

In a world moving at warp speed that pushes us to be more, do more, and tell all who will listen (and often those who don't care to listen!) about our great and glorious achievements, Lent is a time to push the pause button of our fast forwarding lives and ask the hard questions: who am I, and who I am becoming in the sight of God and the service of my neighbor. Betwixt texting and twittering, we are invited to turn from the electronic to the eternal, from words of instant messaging to the first messenger, Jesus, who brings us a word of salvation that never fails.

It is a scary prospect to sit and wait without the instant gratification of affirmation and face the ruthless truth that, despite all our great plans and accomplishments, we are only loved sinners redeemed by a God who in Jesus lived among us. But in this time of waiting, God works, slowly, deliberately, and steadily, to deepen his love in us and move our hearts and wills to change for the better. As we turn to God in Lent, we return to who we are and who we were meant to be: God's beloved sons and daughters.

My hope and prayer is that we will all use this Lent of 2009 to look inward and allow God to turn our hearts outward toward his love, so by Easter, we will return to each other as a people whose lives attest that "the light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

Fr. John T. Maher, C.M.'76
Director, Campus Ministry
University Chaplain

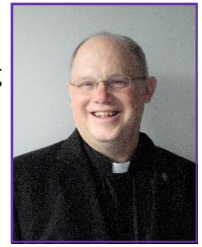
The Season of Lent



Remember man thou art dust
and to dust thou shalt return

"Missing Something?"

I expect most of us have at one time or another realized that we were missing something. It does not matter how many things you turn over and how hard you search, wracking your brain to recall where you had last left it, you simply cannot find it. I am embarrassed to say that this happens more often with me than I would care to admit. It is at such times when I have seemingly exhausted the possibilities of where I might have left something that I turn to St. Anthony, the patron saint of lost things. Oh, maybe you have not heard of St. Anthony of Padua? St. Anthony was a Franciscan monk who was born in Portugal in 1195, but lived most of his life in Padua, Italy. How St. Anthony received this designation as the patron saint of lost things, I am not sure. It is incredible how I have managed to find something through his intercession, though. I have heard the story of others doing precisely the same thing. It's amazing!



But just suppose for a moment that you are not even aware that you are missing something! Now, this is altogether a different matter! You ask, "How can I possibly know that I am missing something, especially something essential in my life, if I am totally unaware of this need?" I expect we merrily live our lives without so much as a thought to this need until we are confronted by a circumstance, an event, or a crisis that forces us to rethink what actually might be missing in our lives. This is not such a comfortable position in which to find one self. There are, though, numerous examples in Scripture; I would like to cite just a couple of examples.

A classic and much beloved parable is told of two sons in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (see Luke 15:11-32). Much attention is understandably given to the younger son because of the extravagance of his father's love for him (and, by inference, the love of God as well!). No doubt, as the younger, profligate son realized how much he was missing at home, he knew that he had to make his return home no matter how humiliating this homecoming might have been for him. Yet, I am struck by the older son's admission that he was never fully aware of how much the father loved him as well. Absent from his life was the very love that gave him reason for doing all that was expected of him. The son was seemingly driven by a compulsion and a need to please, but he never understood that a truer motivation must be love. Something was definitely missing in his life!

Another story relates the preoccupation of Martha with so many tasks whereas Mary is before the feet of Jesus ever attentive to his words and instruction. See Luke 10:38-42. This is the classic account of a busy person who has seemingly missed out on what is most important and essential. We may identify with Martha's resentment toward Mary, and thereby miss the point of the passage. We may have become convinced that the justification for our existence is measured by how many things I can do in the course of a day. My worth goes up even more when I can multi-task! If I become resentful of others, there is a good chance that something is missing in my life. Can I spend time at the feet of Jesus, especially during this Lenten Season?

Lastly, there is the account of a rich person whose wealth had brought him a sense of security, and who was convinced that the accumulation of even more wealth would ensure a future of prosperity. His life was demanded of him that night. His thinking was delusional. See Luke 12:16-21. There is a spiritual wealth of far greater consequence than the things we might acquire. In our consumerist society, though, this can be difficult to accept. Again, I wonder if we truly know what we are missing.

"Missing Something?" is a retreat opportunity that will hopefully alert us to those essentials that we tend to overlook. We might tend to think of Lent as a time to merely give up something. There is an element of truth to this notion. Yet I would also claim that Lent is a liturgical season in which we can find the missing pieces in our lives that, when pieced together, make us that much more whole and complete. Christ truly wants each of us to experience this! Join us for a retreat experience this March 20-22nd at Stella Niagara, when we discover anew the essentials, and begin to place them in the mosaic of our lives. For more information about the retreat and to register for the event, please visit the Campus Ministry Office in the Lower Level of Gallagher.

Fr. Bruce Krause, C.M.,
Campus Minister



Once again this Lent, Campus Ministry is sponsoring "Operation Rice Bowl" please consider participating. Operation Rice Bowl, the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, began in 1975 in the Diocese of Allentown, PA as a response to the drought in the African Sahel. For 34 years, Operation Rice Bowl has called participants to pray with their families and faith communities; fast in solidarity with those who hunger; learn about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas, and give sacrificial contributions to those in need. Over the past 34 years, \$167 million has been collected through Operation Rice Bowl to support CRS' development projects that improve peoples' ability to access food, overseas and in local diocesan communities in the United States. Each Lent, more than 13,500 faith communities across the United States participate in Operation Rice Bowl as a way to respect human dignity and foster solidarity with the poor around the world. (www.crs.org/about)



Where does the money go? Seventy-five percent of your contributions support Catholic Relief Services' development projects overseas which include **agricultural, water, microfinance, Mother and Child Health, Education, as well as HIV and AIDS.** Twenty-five percent of your contributions remain in the Diocese of Buffalo to fund local hunger and poverty alleviation programs. Packets will be available in the Chapel and the Campus Ministry Office the first week of Lent. Please contact Campus Ministry with any further questions concerning "Operation Rice Bowl." In advance thank you very much for your generosity.

SAVE THE DATE...

Saturday, April 4, 2009 "INVISIBLE CHILDREN GALA" at 6 p.m. 4th Floor St. Vincent's Hall

"Invisible Children" is an organization which benefits the children in Northern Uganda who are child soldiers and child slaves. Check out www.invisiblechildren.com. For more information about the gala contact Monica Saltarelli in Campus Ministry at ms@niagara.edu.



St. Vincent de Paul Society...

Make a difference in not only your life but in the lives of the poor by getting involved in working at the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, Our Lady of Lebanon Food Pantry, St. Joe's Outreach Center, Hannah's House, the Magdalene Project, and so much more by getting involved in the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The next meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 25th at 7:30 p.m. "Under The Taps." Learn about our twinning project in Nicaragua which makes an impact on the youth of Nicaragua. Be the Vincentian you wish to be... For more information contact Monica Saltarelli at ms@niagara.edu.

Alternative Spring Break

A B.A.S.I.C. trip to Little Rock, Arkansas is set for February 28th until March 7th. Please keep the following students in your prayers: John Beck, Amanda Vollar, Logan Rudemiller, Lisa Sampogna, Rebecca Condello, Kori Eckert, Lauren Cosetto and Rebecca Suchy.

Monica Saltarelli,
Campus Minister



Turn and Return to God

Niagara Lenten Journey 2009

Ash Wednesday

Masses 12:15pm & 10pm

Prayer Services 8:30am & 5:05pm

Sacred Space Reflection Booklets will be distributed

Weekday Masses

Mon/Wed/Fri @ 12:15pm

Tue/Thurs @ 12:35pm

Sunday Masses

11am & 10pm

Weekly Eucharistic Adoration

Tuesdays 5 - 6 pm

Starting 03/10/09 - Chapel

Confessions

Mondays @ 5 - 5:45pm

Starting 03/09/09 - Chapel

Stations of the Cross

Sunday, March 15 & 29 @ 9pm

Monday March 16 & 30 @ 7pm

Chapel

Lenten Penance Service

Monday, April 6 @ 7pm

Chapel

Lenten Lunches

March 10 @ 12:30 - 1:30pm

"Spirituality - way to Wellness"

April 1 @ 12 - 1pm

"The meaning & Message "

Lite Lunch - Heritage Room

Lent

Sponsored by the Office of Campus Ministry