

St. Agnes Catechetical Review

Volume 1 Issue 10

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Calendar

- 1 = RCIA
- 6 = *First Scrutiny and Dismissal*
- 7 = CLOW, PSR
- 8 = RCIA
- 14 = CLOW, *Second Scrutiny and Dismissal*, PSR
- 15 = RCIA
- 21 = CLOW, PSR *Third Scrutiny*
- 22 = RCIA
- 24 = *Catechist Retreat*
- 28 = CLOW, PSR, *Dismissal*
- 29 = RCIA
- 31 = *Chrism Mass*

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From Sabrina's Desk

As we come into the heart of Lent, I think of the rites celebrated by the RCIA. On February 21, they celebrated the Rite of Elect, which launched them into the final phase of preparations before they enter the Church. For three weekends in March, they will experience the Scrutinies, rites that help them, and us, to look more deeply at our hearts and commit to cleansing ourselves of sin.

Each person ought to scrutinize his/her heart every evening before going to bed in the examen. At the start of each new day, we need to commit ourselves to living better than the day before.

Where Is That In the Bible?

In our day of psychology, studies have been done about the meaning of dreams. At heart, however, dreams are really messages from God about something going on in our lives. We find proof of this in Genesis.

Jacob was traveling from Beersheba going to Haran. At some point, he had to create a camp since night arrived.

Lent is a reminder that we need to commit ourselves to being better people so that the resurrected Christ can shine forth in our lives and be embraced by others. If we look at the evils in our world, many people are *not* doing this.

Each day, the news tells us about the death of a person at the hands of another. We are currently facing a global economic set-back because many of us often take more than we need and leaving others with little. Our health-care is in a state of crisis because of mismanagement. We saw banks giving *huge* bonuses to their employees *after*

they sought help from the government. In our individual lives, we have many sins that *should* be prompting us to go to confession.

Lent is a call to better ourselves through penance. Our RCIA group is a reminder to us of the need to scrutinize our hearts so that we are in tune with the relationship with God, Church, and world. If we are not doing this, we are not living up to our baptismal call.



During his slumber, he had a dream about a stairway going to heaven and angels going up and down the stairs. God promises Jacob that he is never alone, that God is always with him. Jacob was in awe when he awoke and praised God for the promise. He also promises that, if he makes the safe return, God will be central in his life and

he would offer whatever he receives to God. Jacob was given a promise that led to a greater fidelity to God through this dream. Our dreams are channels through which God wants to communicate something to us. If we accept the challenge, we can do nothing less than give him our best. Listen to your dreams!

FROM THE CATECHISM

We live in a culture exiled from God. However, it isn't God who sends us into exile. It is we who choose to walk away from him. The evidence of this exile is found everywhere. And then we wonder why we are unhappy, depressed, confused, dysfunctional, drug addicted, alcoholic, etc. We have lost the center of our existence through this exile. God is always calling us back. Part of our problem is that we sometimes don't know who God is.

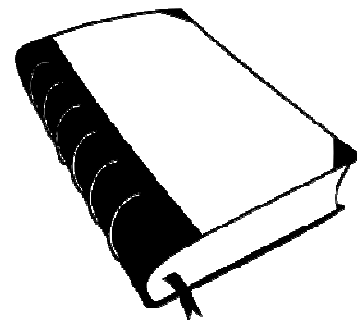
First, God is the only God. The *Catechism* reminds us that *Jesus himself affirms that God is "the one God"*. (202)

Second, God honors us by letting us know his name. Again, we read: *God revealed himself to his people Israel by making his name known to them. A name expresses a person's essence and identity and the meaning of this person's life. God has a name; he is not an anonymous force. To disclose one's name is to make oneself known to others; in a way it is to hand oneself over by becoming accessible, capable of being known more intimately and addressed personally.* (#203) By knowing God's name, we are able to have a relationship with him that is *very* intimate.

In the Old Testament, we bump into one of the names of God as YHWH (I Am Who Am). *God, who reveals his name as I AM reveals himself as the God who is always there, present to his people in order to save them.* (#207)

So many people have gone into exile because of their lack of attachment to the I AM. As a result, they are lost in the caves of their own egos and broken hearts. If they would come back to God, they would find him waiting with open arms, ready to love and heal them, never to abandon them.

If you are in exile, come home!



COME TO THE FEAST!

March 7 is the third Sunday of Lent.

Readings:

First: Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15

Psalms 103

Second: 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

How have you helped another person come out of some type of exile? Are you fruitful in your relationship with God? Do people hear you grumbling in discontent over things?

March 14 is the fourth Sunday of Lent.

Readings:

First: Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

Psalms 34

Second: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Gospel: Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Are you an ambassador/spokesperson for God? If not, what's holding you back? What is your attitude about people who are lax in their faith?

March 21 is the fifth Sunday of Lent.

Readings:

First: Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalms 126

Second: Philippians 3:8-14

Gospel: John 8:1-11

What new thing is God doing in your life? How are you growing into Christian maturity? How are you correcting the "adultery" of sin in your life?

March 28 is Palm Sunday.

Readings:

First: Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalms 22

Second: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: Luke 22:14-23:56

How do you live humbly? How have you denied that you know Christ? Do you embrace the way of the Cross in your life? If you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?



OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF POPES

Quotes from Pope John Paul II:

To imitate and live out the love of Christ is not possible for man by his own strength alone. He becomes capable of this love only by virtue of a gift received, Christ's gift is his Spirit. (Veritatis Splendor)

Your great contribution to the evangelization of your own society is made through your lives. Christ's message must live in you and in the way you live and in the way you

refuse to live. Your lives must spread the fragrance of Christ's Gospel throughout the world. (1987)

Never forget that blindly following the impulse of our emotions often means becoming a slave of our passions. (1998)

There is no room in the world for selfishness. It destroys the meaning of life; it destroys the meaning of love; it reduces the human person to a subhuman level. (Youth, 1987)

Indifference in the face of human suffering, passivity before the causes of pain in the world, cosmetic remedies which lead to no deep healing of persons and peoples: These are grave sins of omission, in the face of which every person of good will must be converted and listen to the cry of those who suffer. (Meeting, 1998)

Those who suffer are no burden to others, but with their suffering contribute to the salvation of all. (Meeting, 1998)



VIA VATICAN II

From *Instruction on the Manner of Distributing Holy Communion (Memoriale Domini)*

When the Church celebrates the memorial of the Lord it affirms by the very rite its faith in Christ and its adoration of him, Christ present in the sacrifice and given as food to those who share the Eucharistic table. For this reason, it is a matter of great concern to the Church that the Eucharist be celebrated and shared

with the greatest dignity and fruitfulness. (p148)

The fact that the lay person is now able to receive holy communion in the hand should not suggest to him that this is ordinary bread, or just any sacred object. Rather ought it strengthen his sense of his dignity as a member of the mystical Body of Christ, of which baptism and the grace of the Eucharist make him a part. (pp152-153)

From *General Instruction on the Roman Missal (Cenam paschalem)*

In the celebration of Mass there is proclaimed the wonderful mystery of the real presence of Christ our Lord under the Eucharistic species. (Forward, #3)



MYSTICAL MEANDERINGS

More from *The Dialogue* by Catherine of Siena:

Just so, the soul in love with my (God's) truth never ceases doing service for all the world, universally and in particular, in proportion to her own burning desire and to the disposition of those who receive. (37)

It is true that all the virtues are bound together, and it is impossible

to have one without having them all. (37)

All I (God) want is love. In loving me you will realize love for your neighbors, and if you love your neighbors you have kept the law. If you are bound by this love you will do everything you can to be of service wherever you are. (38)

You test the virtue of patience in yourself when your neighbors insult

you. Your humility is tested by the proud, your faith by the unfaithful, you hope by the person who has no hope. Your justice is tried by the unjust, your compassion by the cruel, and your gentleness and kindness by the wrathful. Your neighbors are the channel through which all your virtues are tested and come to birth, just as evil give birth to all their vices through their neighbors. (38)



THE POPES AND THEIR PET BULLS

Traditi Humiliati was written for bishops by Pope Pius VIII in 1829:

We rejoice and praise Christ, who raised up shepherds for the safekeeping of His flock. These shepherds vigilantly lead their flocks so as not to lose even one of those they have received from the Father. (#2)

Although God may console us with you, we are nonetheless sad. This is due to the numberless errors and the teachings of perverse doctrines which, no longer secretly and clandestinely but openly and vigorously attack the Catholic faith...The authority of the Church is weakened and the protectors of things sacred are snatched away and held in contempt. The holy precepts are despised, the celebration of divine offices is ridiculed, and the worship of God is cursed by the sinner. (#3)

Among these heresies belong that foul contrivance of the sophists of this age who do not admit any difference among the professions of faith and who think that the portal of eternal salvation opens for all from any religion. They, therefore, label with the stigma of levity and stupidity those who, having abandoned the religion which they learned, embrace another of any kind, even Catholicism. This is certainly a monstrous impiety which assigns the same praise and the mark of the just and upright man to truth and to error, to virtue and to vice, to goodness and to turpitude...Against these experienced sophists the people must be taught that the profession of the Catholic faith is uniquely true, as the apostle proclaim one Lord, one faith, one baptism. (#4)

We must also be wary of those who publish the Bible with new interpretations contrary to the Church's laws. They skillfully distort the meaning by

their own interpretation...The sacred Synod of Trent had decreed in order to restrain impudent characters, that no one, relying on his own prudence in matters of faith and of conduct which concerns Christian doctrine, might twist the sacred Scriptures to his own opinion, or to an opinion contrary to that of the Church or the popes. (#5)

We also want you to imbue your flock with reverence for the sanctity of marriage so that they may never do anything to detract from the dignity of this sacrament. They should do nothing that might be unbecoming to this spotless union nor anything that might cause doubt about the perpetuity of the bond of matrimony...It is agreed that the union of marriage signifies the perpetual and sublime union of Christ with His Church; as a result, the close union of husband and wife is a sacrament, that is, a sacred sign of the immortal love of Christ for His spouse. (#10)

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, May 24, 1829, the first year of Our pontificate.



VIBRANT VIRTUES

Besides our mystics, there are others, some Protestant, who have written about the virtues. Here are some thoughts:

It would be disastrous to have anything that God did not deem best for us or to have what is best for us before God timed it. (Lloyd John Ogilvie)

There is much difference between genuine patience and sullen endurance, as between the smile of love, and the malicious gnashing of teeth. (William Swan Plumer)

Your representative owes you, not industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion. (Edmund Burke)

Lost time is never found again. (Benjamin Franklin)

Abundance is, in large part, an attitude. (Sue Patton Thoele)

There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do. (Freya Stark)

If you're not living on the edge, you're taking up too much room. (Lorraine Teel)

Why not be one's self? That is the whole secret of a successful appearance. If one is a greyhound, why try to look like a Pekinese? (Edith Sitwell)

