

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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March 30, 2026

Brothers and Sisters,

Last week, we reflected on “Naming the sinful and the unhealthy in our life and choosing to do something about it during this Season of Lent. We thought about discerning what we need to and want to change in our lives and begin the process of conversion and transformation. This week we focus on naming the good, the healthy and the holy in our lives.

We must name the good and cultivate all that is decent, good, noble and virtuous - all that is of God and from God if real conversion and transformation has to happen in our lives. This must be done in “TRUTH” – not mere sentimentality, which leads to flattery. God has blessed us with the gifts of His Holy Spirit: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, Fear of the Lord as well as many other virtues. During this last week of Lent, reflect on these gifts of the Holy Spirit and name all other gifts that God has blessed you with. Be grateful for these gifts. Be attentive to those gifts that you need to appreciate and nurture.

God has blessed us with his noble qualities – virtues that guide and direct our lives: Faith, Hope, Love, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance and many other qualities. During this last week of Lent, reflect on these virtues and name other qualities that God has blessed you with. Be especially attentive to those virtues that you need to nurture.

God continues to empower us with His Holy Spirit to become fulfilled in the fruitfulness of His Spirit: Charity, Generosity, Joy, Gentleness, Peacefulness, Faithfulness, Patience, Modesty, Kindness, Self-control, Goodness and Chastity. During this last week of Lent, reflect on these and other qualities, fruits of living in the Holy Spirit which God has blessed you with. Be attentive to those qualities that you need to nurture.

God has blessed us with family, friends and neighbors. Let us be grateful for these wonderful gifts. Holy week is a good time to gratefully remember these relationship. Let us be especially attentive to those relationships that need healing and nurturing.

I encourage you to take a few moments during this Holy Week to be still and reflect on how your day has been. Take a few moments also to thank the Lord for the good, the healthy and the holy in your life. Be a channel of blessing and grace for your family, friends and neighbors.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Holy Week

March 30 – April 4, 2026

**No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others.
So, no matter how much time you spend fasting,
no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor
and eat ashes and sigh continually,
if you do no good to others,
you do nothing great.
(John Chrysostom)**

March 30 – Monday of Holy Week

Be still! Organize your time according to what is important in your life!.

Isaiah 42:1-7

The servant is raised up to proclaim justice, a time of deliverance. Isaiah describes this servant as having the finest qualities of Israel and her great leaders: noble, gentle and wise. **Strive to be noble, gentle and wise!**

Psalm 27

**I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord with courage;
be stouthearted and wait for the Lord.**

John 12:1-11

Jesus attended a banquet in the home of Lazarus in Bethany. Martha served. How wonderful! Martha is at it again. She is a serving disciple. She expressed her love the way she knew best - serving and serving in the kitchen, not on a public platform or in a career lived in the eyes of

men. **Service without notice...just with simple, profound, pure love! Be a serving disciple but serve with love!**

Mary was different. Her love didn't calculate the cost. She took the precious thing she had and spent it on Jesus - love's extravaganza! **Love gives all there is to give...**

It was an honor to anoint someone's head. Mary anointed the feet of Jesus. She wasn't seeking honor. She just loved and served the best way she knew. She humbled herself in service and in care. **Serve without seeking to be honored...**

"The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment". What else? Martha's service and Mary's anointing - the house had to be filled with the fragrance of love...**Love has its own fragrance and it has a way of transforming the air!**

Judas couldn't appreciate such love. He saw "extravagant waste" and nothing more. Hearts that are full of greed and jealousy and bitterness and such slings and arrows cannot see and appreciate love and all love's expressions.

Learn to appreciate the simple and the profound signs and expressions of love all around you.

Saint of the Day, March 30 - St. Peter Regalado and 14 other saints are remembered this day

Peter Regalado was born of wealthy and devout parents at Valladolid in Spain in 1390. He lost his father at an early age. At the age of 13, he was allowed to enter the Conventual Franciscans. Shortly after his ordination, he was made superior of the friary in Aguilar. He became part of a group of friars who wanted to lead a life of greater poverty and penance. In 1442, he was appointed head of all the Spanish Franciscans in his reform group.

Peter led the friars by his example. A special love of the poor and the sick characterized Peter. Miraculous stories are told about his charity to the poor. For example, the bread never seemed to run out as long as Peter had hungry people to feed. Throughout most of his life, Peter went hungry; he lived only on bread and water. Immediately after his death on March 31, 1456, his grave became a place of pilgrimage. Peter was canonized in 1746.

March 31 – Tuesday of Holy Week

Serenity is tranquility in the midst of chaos and confusion.

Isaiah 49:1-6

Isaiah encountered disappointments and began to feel that he had wasted his time and had worked for nothing. He came out of this experience with renewed faith in his calling. He also gained new insights about his vocation which gave him strength. He had an intense experience of being called by God even before his birth, “from his mother’s womb”, to be a “servant” and much more...to be a light to the nations... that salvation “may reach the ends of the earth”.

Psalm 71

**In you O Lord, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your justice rescue me and deliver me;
incline your ear to me and save me.**

John 13:21-38

Jesus and the disciples were around the Passover table. Tension mounted among the twelve disciples as Jesus told them that one of them would betray him. Questions about who the betrayer was, suspicion of each other...many such factors created confusion. It is amazing to know how Jesus tried to help the disciples become aware of what was happening and what was going to happen to him. They just failed to understand. They were too preoccupied with themselves and their ambitions.

Jesus made a final and special appeal to the heart of Judas. For the host to offer a special morsel from the dish was a sign of special friendship. When Jesus handed Judas Iscariot the “bit of food”, the “dipped morsel”, it was an offer of “special friendship”, a final appeal to the heart. But the heart of Judas was unmoved, full of greed, darkness, hate and didn’t see the light or the love that was offered. Jesus told Peter as he affirmed his loyalty that even he would deny him ‘three times before the cock crows’. This was a tough time for Jesus and his disciples.

Be alert! Stay awake! Be sensitive to those around you... Be compassionate!

Saint of the Day, March 31 - St. Benjamin and 7 other saints are remembered this day.

Benjamin was born in Iran around the year 329. We do not have information about his early life. He was a deacon martyred around 424 in Persia. He was executed during a period of persecution of Christians that lasted forty years and through the reign of two Persian kings. The persecution began in response to the burning of the Temple of Fire, the great sanctuary of the Persians, by Bishop Abdas in 420. King Isdegerd threatened to destroy all the churches of the Christians unless the Bishop would rebuild it.

Abdas refused to comply and the threat was executed. Churches were demolished, Abdas himself was put to death, and a general persecution began which lasted forty years. Isdegerd died in 421, but his son and successor, Varanes, carried on the persecution with great fury. The Christians were submitted to the cruelest tortures.

Benjamin was imprisoned for a year for his Christian faith, and later released with the condition that he abandons preaching or speaking of his religion. His release was obtained by the Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II through an ambassador. However, Benjamin declared that it was his duty to preach about Christ and that he could not be silent. As a consequence, he was tortured mercilessly until his death in the year 424 in Persia.

April 1 – Wednesday of Holy Week

**Slow down! Settle into silence, solitude and serenity. Close your eyes!
Take a deep breath! Open your eyes! Behold, you are still here!**

Isaiah 50:4-9

The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I may know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them.

Reflect on developing a “well-trained tongue” and “well-disciplined” life... Reflect on speaking words of affirmation, compassion, encouragement, kindness and support...

Remember the “weary” – many who are “weary” of hunger and thirst, of poverty and disease; of war and violence; of life and its many such struggles...

Psalm 69

**I will praise the name of God in song,
And I will glorify him with thanksgiving...
You who seek God, may your hearts be merry!**

Mathew 26:14-25

Judas made plans to betray Jesus for thirty silver pieces...sold out his master who trusted him and offered him friendship...what a dreadful bargain!!! This betrayal was not only the betrayal of Jesus – it was also the betrayal of the other eleven disciples, betrayal of friendship, betrayal of community...

Remember and pray with those who suffer from betrayal from their loved ones!

Jesus, gently, but definitely and directly called Judas to reflect over what he was planning to do. Judas refused to listen.

Listen to the gentle voices that call you to reflect on what you are doing! Listen and respond to the gentle corrections that come from those around you!

Saint of the Day, April 1 - St. Hugh of Grenoble and 16 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Hugh was born in 1053 in southeastern France at Châteauneuf-sur-Isère, near Grenoble in the western foothills of the Alps. He showed piety and theological facility from a young age. While still a layman, he was made a canon of Valence. At the Council of Avignon in 1080, he was elected bishop of Grenoble, though he was not yet ordained.

Hugh was selected to carry out reforms of abuses within the Church which had been instituted under Pope Gregory VII, who ordained Hugh in Rome after his election as bishop. Corruption seemed to loom in every direction: the buying and selling of Church offices, violations of clerical celibacy, lay control of Church property, religious indifference and/or ignorance.

After two years of successfully battling abuses in Grenoble such as simony (the selling of church positions) and enforcing rules about clerical celibacy, Hugh wanted to retire to the great Benedictine monastery at Cluny. However, Pope Gregory ordered him to remain in his position as bishop. He was well-known for his inspired preaching and his generosity to the poor.

In 1084, Hugh helped St. Bruno of Cologne and six of his companions found the great Carthusian monastery "La Grande Chartreuse" high in the Alps. They devoted their monastic life to prayer and study and were visited by Hugh often. Hugh adopted the monastic way of life, practiced by the monks at Chartreuse. After many years of illness which he endured in patient silence, St. Hugh died on April 1, 1132 and was canonized two years later by Pope Innocent II.

April 2 – Holy Thursday

Being serene is being present, when your attention is fully and intensely now, in this moment!

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116; I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.

On Holy Thursday, we remember Jesus having his last supper with his disciples. Great things happened during this meal. He had washed the feet of his disciples and called them to follow his example in gracious and self-sacrificing service. Listen to him calling you! Try to imagine this scene. You are sitting at the table with Jesus and his friends on the night before he died. A confusing sorrow overshadows you. Yet a mysterious hope has settled in your heart.

Remember Jesus bending his knees before his disciples with a bowl of water, to wash their feet...take a moment... imagine him with an apron around his waist and a bowl of water in his hands, on his knees, before you...Imagine God in an apron with a bowl of water ready to wash your feet!!!

We would feel more comfortable, if we could trade places...We wouldn't mind kneeling before Jesus to wash his feet...We can't let him love that much! Can we? But he said: You can't belong with me, unless I wash your feet...I need to do this for you and I love to do this for you!!! This is a gift that he offers us. We must accept this gift of "washing", the cleansing, forgiving, healing and transforming power of "foot-washing"and we must do this for one another....be "foot-washers" ...

Remember: the Christian image is that of mother and child. However much the child may wash himself, the mother finally washes the child and attends to areas the child has not been able to reach...Mother knows best! Accept the gift of love in this "foot-washing" and share it with others. Remember the times you have refused this gift!

Take a moment...remember: you and I stand in constant need of foot washing!

We also remember Jesus breaking bread and saying to all his followers: Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body. I am breaking it for you. You must do the same. We remember him taking the cup and saying to all his followers: Take this and drink of it. This is my blood poured out for you. You must do the same.

Saint of the Day, April 2 - St. Francis of Paola and 23 other saints are remembered this day.

Francis was born in the town of Paola, Italy and educated by the Franciscan friars. At the age of 13, he entered a friary of the Franciscan Order to fulfill the vow made by his parents. At the completion of the year he went with his parents on a pilgrimage to Assisi, Rome, and other places of devotion. Returning to Paola, he selected a secluded cave on his father's estate and lived in solitude; but later on, he found an even-more secluded cave on the sea coast. Here he remained alone for about six years, giving himself to prayer and mortification.

Before he was 20, he received the first followers who had come to imitate his way of life. Seventeen years later, when his disciples had grown in number, Francis established a Rule for

his austere community and sought Church approval. This was the founding of the Hermits of St. Francis of Assisi, who were approved by the Holy See in 1474.

In 1492, Francis changed the name of his community to “Minims” because he wanted them to be known as the least (minimi) in the household of God. Humility was to be the hallmark of the brothers as it had been in Francis’s personal life. Besides the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, Francis enjoined upon his followers the fourth obligation of a perpetual Lenten fast. He felt that heroic mortification was necessary as a means for spiritual growth.

It was Francis’s desire to be a contemplative hermit, yet he believed that God was calling him to the apostolic life. He began to use the gifts he had received, such as the gifts of miracles and prophecy, to minister to the people of God. A defender of the poor and oppressed, Francis incurred the wrath of King Ferdinand of Naples for the admonitions he directed toward the king and his sons.

Following the request of Pope Sixtus IV, Francis traveled to Paris to help Louis XI of France prepare for his death. While ministering to the king, Francis was able to influence the course of national politics. He helped to restore peace between France and Brittany by advising a marriage between the ruling families, and between France and Spain by persuading Louis XI to return some disputed land.

Francis was now eager to return to Italy, but the king would not permit him, not wishing to lose his counsels and direction. Francis spent the last three months of his life in entire solitude, preparing for death. On Holy Thursday of 1507 he gathered his community around him and exhorted them specially to have mutual charity amongst themselves and to maintain the rigor of their life and in particular perpetual abstinence. The next day, Good Friday, he again called them together and gave them his last instructions and appointed a Vicar General. He then received the last rites and asked to have the Passion according to St. John read out to him, and whilst this was being read, he died on April 2, 1507, almost a week after his 91st birthday.

April 3 - Good Friday

“Serenity is when you find peace in the midst of chaos.”

Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12; Psalm 31; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1 to 19:42

On Good Friday, we remember Jesus being betrayed, tried, judged, condemned and crucified (Mark 14:1 – 15:47). We remember him dying on a cross. We remember Jesus giving himself totally in life and in death...obedient unto death on the cross. We also remember those who

suffer, those with heavy burdens to carry and those who have no one to help them carry their burdens.

We see much more in this cross. **We see the infinite value of human life** - we see Jesus dying out of love for humanity, we see redemption - we see the one who left the glory of heavenly home and entered into our life and into our death.

In the cross we see hope, we encounter love. The cross tells us that in the love of God nothing is lost.

We remember the cross, the sign of shame and punishment, becoming the symbol of sacrifice, healing, unconditional love, total giving, redemption and salvation. We remember and relive the passion, the cross and the death of Jesus.

God is found in the most unexpected places and situations. No one expected to find the Messiah on the cross. But that is just the way God revealed the power of His generous, unconditional, unconquerable, benevolent love.

To the world Jesus was condemned and finished. To the believer, Jesus being lifted on the cross is the Victory of Grace and the Ultimate revelation of God's Love. The death of Jesus reveals the victory of Grace and the power of God's Love. It reveals God as LOVE.

The one lifted on the cross reveals glory and not shame. The creator of the world comes to the world... the creator of the earth walks on the earth which he created... falls to the earth...prostrates on the earth...goes deep into the earth... uses mud to heal... walks into places where he was rejected...

The creator of the flesh becomes flesh... makes his abode in the flesh. The creator of the tree hangs on the tree and gives up his life for those who rejected him. Acting out of love to the extent of dying on a cross is a mystery hard to grasp...We carry our crosses carefully, trying to make sure they don't take too much out of us! Let us take time to contemplate his mystery of the cross!

Saint of the Day, April 3 - St Benedict the African and 10 other saints are remembered this day.

Benedict was born to Cristoforo and Diana Manasseri, Africans who were taken as slaves in the early 16th century to San Fratello, a small town near Messina, Sicily. They were given Italian names and later were converted to Christianity. Benedict's parents were granted freedom for their son before his birth because of their "loyal service". Like most peasants, Benedict did not attend any school and was illiterate.

During his youth, he worked as a shepherd and was quick to give what he had earned to the poor. When he was 21 years old, he was publicly insulted for his color. His patient and dignified bearing at this time was noted by the leader of an independent group of hermits on nearby Monte Pellegrino, who followed the Rule for hermit life written by St. Francis of Assisi. Benedict was quickly invited to join that community, and shortly thereafter he gave up all his earthly possessions and joined them. He served as the cook for the community and at the age of twenty-eight succeeded Jerome Lanze as leader of the group.

In 1564 Pope Pius IV disbanded independent communities of hermits, ordering them to attach themselves to an established religious Order, in this case, the Order of Friars Minor. Once a friar of the Order, Benedict was assigned to Palermo to the Franciscan Friary of St. Mary of Jesus. He started at the friary as a cook, but, showing the degree of his advancement in the spiritual life, he was soon appointed as the Master of novices, and later as Guardian of the community, although he was only a lay brother and not a priest, and was illiterate.

Benedict accepted the assignment and successfully helped the order adopt a stricter version of the Franciscan Rule of life. He was widely respected for his deep, intuitive understanding of theology and Scripture, and was often sought for counseling. He also had a reputation as a healer of the sick. Combined, these characteristics continued to draw many visitors to him. As he enjoyed cooking, he returned to kitchen duty in his later years. Benedict died at the age of 65 in 1589. Upon his death, King Philip III of Spain ordered the construction of a magnificent tomb to house his remains in the friary church.

April 4 – Holy Saturday

Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are found.

(Eckhart Tolle)

Exodus 14:15-15:1; (Rsp) Exodus 15:1-6. 17-18; Romans 6:3-11; Mathew 28:1-10

Journey through Lent has brought us to the tomb of Jesus. We want the tomb to release its contents! We want Jesus to come forth, but we must wait...three days!

Jesus did die and was buried in a tomb. Jesus had told us that His Father is a Caring, Loving, Faithful, and Searching Father. His WORD that became flesh also experienced death. The Love of the Father was so great that he did not spare His Son our death. The Journey to Jerusalem did not stop at the Cross - it continued into the tomb and beyond. The mystery of hope unfolds before the tomb holding Jesus - only an eye of faith can see it as it unfolds.

The Cross and the tomb do not offer "quick fix, easy healing" - they do call us to wait in Hope for victory/glory beyond understanding. We can withdraw from the tomb - OR look deep inside and find it empty - look around and find HIM alive and moving and calling us.

The forces of pain, suffering, rejection and death are too much with us - the rock remains across the tomb. To the one grown/matured in faith, the rock has been rolled away, the burden has been lifted! Jesus is alive and is going before us to places and situations that we will meet, to people we will encounter, to suffering we will endure, to rejection we will experience, to death we will face...etc.

We did make a journey with Jesus through Lent and have come to experience Easter. It was a great journey. The whole journey is far greater than all that we did in making the journey. The mystery of following Jesus cannot be put into simple words. The mystery of dying and rising with Christ is an experience at the depth of our hearts which no word can describe. We may not look different - we may not even feel different.

We will continue to meet testing times - may even fight a few demons. We will have our periods of fatigue and despair, fear and anxiety, doubts and frustrations. We may make wrong turns and "U" turns. Yet deep inside of us, we are different because we met him in life and in death – we have risen with him – we are new persons and a new people because the one who died and was laid in the tomb is alive.

Saint of the Day, April 4 - St. Isidore of Seville 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Isidore was born in Cartagena, Spain around the year 560. His parents were members of an influential family who were instrumental in the political-religious maneuvering that converted the Visigothic kings from Arianism to Catholicism. The Catholic Church celebrates him and all his siblings as known saints: An elder brother, Leander of Seville, immediately preceded Isidore as Archbishop of Seville; A younger brother, Fulgentius of Cartagena, served as the Bishop of Astigi; his sister, Florentina of Cartagena, served God as a nun and allegedly ruled over forty convents and one thousand consecrated religious.

Isidore was educated in the Cathedral School of Seville by his elder brother, whom he succeeded as bishop of Seville. Isidore applied himself to study diligently enough that he quickly mastered Latin, and acquired some Greek, and Hebrew. The 76 years of Isidore's life were a time of conflict and growth for the Church in Spain. The Visigoths had invaded the land a century and a half earlier, and shortly before Isidore's birth they set up their own capital. They were Arians—Christians who said Christ was not God. Thus, Spain was split in two, Catholic Romans struggling with Arian Goths.

Isidore reunited Spain, making it a center of culture and learning. The country served as a teacher and guide for other European countries whose culture was also threatened by barbarian invaders. An amazingly learned man, he was sometimes called “The Schoolmaster of the Middle Ages” because the encyclopedia he wrote was used as a textbook for nine centuries. He required seminaries to be built in every diocese, wrote a Rule for religious orders, and founded schools that taught every branch of learning. Isidore wrote numerous books, including a dictionary, an encyclopedia, a history of Goths, and a history of the world—beginning with creation!

He continued his austerities even into his old age. During the last six months of his life, he increased his charities so much that his house was crowded from morning till night with the poor of the countryside. Isidore of Seville died on April 4, 636 after serving more than 32 years as archbishop of Seville

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**An entire sea of water can't sink a ship unless it gets inside the ship.
Similarly, the negativity of the world can't put you down
unless you allow it to get inside you.**



**The week that
changed the
world!**