

Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone, Diocese of Derry
St. Patrick's Church, Greencastle **Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Broughderg**
The First Sunday of Lent (21st February, 2010)
The Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU
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Lent is the season of grace and conversion, of penance and reconciliation, of renewal of our baptismal promises. Lent is marked with seriousness, consciousness of the poorest of the poor, attention to prayer and liturgy, attentive listening to the word of God, and "with the gladness spiritual desire await holy Easter". *Holy Rule of St. Benedict (Chapter XLIX (49))*

Liturgy Schedule for the First Week of Lent (21st February, 2010 – 28th February, 2010)			
Saturday Evening <i>Do This In Memory</i>	St. Patrick's	5.30pm Confessions	
Sunday 21st February First Sunday of Lent	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	6.00pm Vigil Mass for Sunday 9:00am Mass: 'Misso Pro Populo' 10.30am Confessions 11:00am Mass: Bridget and John Quinn – Anniversary	
Monday 22nd February Chair of St. Peter (apostle)	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass: Ellen Conway – 4 th Anniversary	
Tuesday 23rd February First Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Wednesday 24th February First Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Thursday 25th February First Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Friday 26th February First Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	7.30pm Stations of the Cross for and lead by children 8:00pm Mass: Philip Morris – 4 th Anniversary	
Saturday 27th February First Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Saturday Evening	St. Patrick's	5.30pm Confessions 6.00pm Vigil Mass for Sunday	
Sunday 28th February Second Sunday of Lent	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	9:00am Mass: 'Misso Pro Populo' 10.30am Confessions 11:00am Mass	

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread – Trócaire's Lenten theme for 2010: Please give the Trócaire box a prominent place in your home. Make this Lent another record breaker for your generosity. Thank you for everything you have given to previous Lenten campaigns, first established in 1973. Please Check out trocaire.org

Weekly Offerings: Thank you for your generosity to last week's collection which amounted to **£1,145** and for the **£50** for Bishop Hegarty's Stewardship Trust Fund. **Please support your parish by using your envelope even if you must attend Mass outside your parish, thank you.** Envelopes received from visitors coming to Mass in Greencastle are returned to those parishes.

Remembering Our Dead: We pray for **Bridget and John Quinn, Annie Quinn, Ellen Conway and Philip Morris** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Our Lady of Lourdes PS – Cookery Lessons: In the school on Thursday 25th February from 7.00pm until 9.00pm.

Parish Census Forms: Thank you for your cooperation. Please return them before 28th February or as soon as possible.

Faith Friends: Thank you to everyone who has committed to praying for the young people who will be confirmed in our parish on Sunday 18th April.

Next Sunday's Readings: Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Psalm 26; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 9:28-36 Lectionary I, page 228
(Sunday: Year C) (Weekday: Year 2)

Lotto Numbers: 1, 2, 9, 15 (2 winners with 3 numbers – £25 each) **Next Jackpot:** £1,750

This Week's Calendar of Saints:

Sunday 21st February – St. Peter Damian (bishop and doctor of the Church) Not celebrated this year.
(First Sunday of Lent)
Monday 22nd February – Feast of the Chair of St. Peter the Apostle This ancient feast relates to early Roman custom at his time of year of remembering the ancestors of the family; those who presided the Chair of St. Peter over the family fortunes. The texts today celebrate Peter as Bishop of Rome. We recall Christ's choice of Peter for service to the whole Church.
Sunday 21st February – St. Polycarp (bishop and martyr) Was bishop of Smyrna or Izmir in modern Turkey. He was born around the year 69 and was a disciple of St. John the Apostle. He was martyred in 155.

Parish Liturgy for 27th / 28th February, 2010	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Prayers of Intercession	Emma Clarke	Erin Hood	<i>Volunteers needed</i>
Offertory Gifts	The family of Michaela McBride	The family of Maeve McCullagh	

Parish Buildings and Maintenance Committee: Meeting at 9.00pm on Monday 22nd February.

Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Broughderg 25th Anniversary (1st September, 2010): We would like to mark its role in the life of our faith community. If you received any of the sacraments on your spiritual journey there (Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Marriage) and have a photograph or a story you would like to share with our community please contact Josephine Clarke, Anne McDermott or Fr. Hasson. *There will be an Anniversary Committee meeting at 8.30pm on Tuesday 23rd February.*

Unique Celebration: Kitty Fox of Maryville will D.V. celebrate her 100th birthday on 10th March at the GAA Community Centre with a celebration of Mass at 6.00pm followed by music and refreshments. Her relatives Mary and John Enright would like all neighbours and friends to join her. They would like to know who is coming so please RSVP to (028) 8164 7836. In lieu of personal gifts they would prefer, if you desire, donations to *Marie Curie Cancer Care* who will attend this event.

Pope John Paul II Annual Award Ceremony: Tuesday 2nd March at 7.30pm in the Millennium Forum, Derry. The Very Rev. Edmund Power OSB, Abbot of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome will present the awards. Admission is by ticket only. Contact Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre:
T: (028) 7126 4087 **E:** admin@thepopejohnpauliiaward.com **W:** thepopejohnpauliiaward.com

The Footprints of God – A Retreat for Lent: Church of Christ the King, Strathroy, Omagh. Monday Evenings 8 – 9 pm
Each Monday evening of Lent beginning on Monday before Ash Wednesday we will journey reflectively with Jesus as he makes his way to Jerusalem. As we reflect on the journey Jesus took to Jerusalem, where he suffered and died for us, we grow in an understanding of the journey of our own lives and find nourishment and guidance for our pilgrimage through life.
... **Join us as we walk in the Footprints of God ...**

22 nd Feb.	Jesus Baptised - <i>Ourselves and Others</i>	22 nd Mar.	Gethsemane - <i>Living through Crises</i>
1 st Mar.	Jesus Tempted - <i>Living with Temptation</i>	29 th Mar.	Crucifixion - <i>Living with Loss</i>
8 th Mar.	Jesus Transfigured - <i>Finding Light on a Dark Road</i>	Easter Week	Resurrection - <i>Reflections on Eternity</i>
16 th Mar.	Jesus Stills a Storm - <i>A Quiet Mind</i>	Tea, coffee and refreshments served each evening	

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (16th – 21st July, 2010): Cost £629 – payable in instalments. Application forms are now available in the sacristy (Greencastle). Forms for those in need of special care or those aged 80 or over are available only from the Pilgrimage Office, Derry. Telephone: (028) 7126 0293. Special arrangements are made for the youth who will be lead by the Pilgrimage Youth Team.

Carmelite Retreat Centre (Termonbacca, Derry) – One-Day Retreat for Senior Citizens. **Tuesday 23rd/Thursday 25th February,** 10.30am to 5.00pm. Cost £15 and includes a four course lunch. Call (028)-7126 2512 during office hours.

Loreto House (Linsfort, Buncrana, Co Donegal) – Holy Week Retreat: 28th March until 3rd April. With Fr. Colm Lavelle S.J. To book a place call 00353 74 / 9362204 or email info@loretolinsfort.com Cost: €380 residential and €200 non-residential. **Prayer Meetings every Monday in Lent:** Beginning 22nd February from 8.00pm to 9.00pm.

Youthlife – Bereaved by suicide – Growing Through Change Programme (Friday 26th – Sunday 28th February) – Residential Weekend: In the Centre at the Ulster American Folk Park.
For further information and application forms please contact Bridie or Pat on (028) 7137 7227 or 07912507388.
You can also email youthlife_be@hotmail.com or visit our web site at youthlife.btik.com *See below for more details*

Knock Marriage Introduction Bureau: The aim of the Bureau is to introduce people considering marriage to a suitable marriage partner. Over 800 marriages have taken place as a result of these introductions. If you are searching for a suitable partner, why not consider applying? For further information contact the Bureau at Knock, Co. Mayo. Phone 00353 94937 5960 or visit our website at www.knockmarriagebureau.com and read about the workings of the Bureau.

The Columba Community (Columba House, 11 Queen Street, Derry) in conjunction with the YARD project will be hosting a 2 day Family Support Programme on the 13th and 14th March at Columba House. The programme is for anyone over 18 years of age who has been affected by or is concerned about the abuse of alcohol, drugs or gambling of a family member or friend. The programme will help people understand addiction and through support, encouragement and information it aims to help you learn new ways to cope and improve the quality of your life. This is an introduction to the 12 Step programme way of living. For more information or to book a place on the course please contact Claire on (028) 7126 9113 (ROI (048) 71269 113) or email the yardproject@btinternet.com.

Every Friday Night	Card playing from 8.30pm.	Upcoming BADA Events
Monday 22nd February	Broughderg Area Development Association Ltd Annual General Meeting at 8.00pm.	

Parenting Apart - Free 4 Week Programme: Practical advice and guidance on what children need to know, and what parents can do to meet their children's needs. Wednesday 10th February to Wednesday 3rd March from 6.00pm to 8.00pm. Parents Advice Centre (028) 7137 2006 (*funded by Northern Ireland Family Mediation*)

IHCPT Derry Group 30th Anniversary Celebration Dinner Dance: To celebrate 30 years of taking young people with special needs on their annual Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes Group 110 of the Irish Pilgrimage Trust (The 'Derry' Group) will be holding a celebration dinner dance in the City Hotel on Saturday 27th February, music provided by the Odyssey band. The group would like to invite anyone who has travelled with us over the years, young people or group carers, their families and all those who have supported and helped us in any way to join us in what should be a great evening to meet old friends and relive memories of some very special times. Tickets cost £25 and can be obtained from Stephen Browne at 07912500195.

Medjugorje Irish Centre: Every week for a year we are giving away one weeks free apartment accommodation for up to 4 people. Text the word PILGRIM followed by your name and county to 60777 or phone us and we can enter you into the draw for free. Special introductory offer E260 package. Website www.med-irishcentre.com Tel: (028) 82241888.

Study Theology From Home: The Dominicans are offering a theology programme specifically for lay people, offered by distance learning. This means that one can study for a certificate, diploma or degree in theology, and even more importantly, become more educated in the Faith, all from the comfort of home. For more information contact The Priory Institute, Tallaght Village, Dublin 24, Tel: 00353 1404 8124/7 or email enquiries@prioryinstitute.com Visit our website www.prioryinstitute.com

Youthlife – Bereaved by suicide – Growing Through Change Programme (Friday 26th – Sunday 28th):
Grieving is a natural response to loss. It brings with it many different feelings and emotions. The bereaved need to be given time and space to express and work through their feelings of grief. When a loved one dies by suicide, the grieving response can be more complex and even more difficult to cope with. The feelings and emotions can appear so intense and unbearable that you may feel that you will not be able to cope. Families bereaved by suicide often feel socially isolated. Friends and neighbours not knowing what to say may withdraw or avoid you. As a result families may feel stigmatised and isolated. You may not know anyone else bereaved in this tragic way. This may add to the intense feelings of grief and loss and make your unique journey through grief especially lonely and difficult.
The trauma is particularly difficult for children and young people to deal with because their limited life experience does not yet contain the tools to cope with such a situation. Often the family tries to protect the children by not telling them what has happened and by keeping them away from the funeral. Young people need to work through their grief also. They need to know that it is alright to show their grief in their own way without feeling guilty or wrong.
The **Growing Through Change Residential Weekend** is a structured programme presented by a team of trained young volunteers who themselves have experienced loss in this tragic way. Young people take a strong leadership role in all aspects of the weekend. They will be presenting their personal stories of grief and loss and will be reaching out to their peers with compassion and care. In small discussion groups the Youthlife team will create a confidential, supported and neutral environment for young people to feel safe to explore and share their individual stories with the support and acceptance of their peer group.
The weekend is residential and takes place in the Residential Centre, Ulster American Folk Park from 8.00pm on Friday 26th until 5.00pm on Sunday 28th February. The activities of the weekend consist of:
Personal experience presentations by young volunteers // Small discussion groups // Audio and visual presentations // Role plays // Recreational and fun activities.

For further information and application forms please contact Bridie or Pat at:
Youthlife Centre, 23 Bishop Street, Derry. BT48 6PR
Tel: (028) 7137 7227 Mobile: 07912507388
Email: youthlife_be@hotmail.com
or visit our web site at youthlife.btik.com

Lenten Messages

Lenten Guidelines: Fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by everyone aged 18 years of age and older, who has not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day, one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, enough to maintain strength, may be taken, according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but consuming liquids, including milk and juices is allowed. **Abstinence** is observed by everyone 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence no meat is allowed. Note that when health or the ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. Ash Wednesday, all the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday are days of abstinence. If a person is unable to observe the above regulations due to ill health or other serious reasons, other suitable forms of self-denial are encouraged.

PAPAL MESSAGE FOR LENT 2010 VATICAN CITY, 4 FEB 2010 (VIS)

Made public today was the 2010 Lenten Message of the Holy Father Benedict XVI. The text, dated 30th October, 2009, has as its title a passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans: "The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ". The full English-language translation of the document is given below:

"Each year, on the occasion of Lent, the Church invites us to a sincere review of our life in light of the teachings of the Gospel. This year, I would like to offer you some reflections on the great theme of justice, beginning from the Pauline affirmation: 'The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ'.

"First of all, I want to consider the meaning of the term 'justice', which in common usage implies 'to render to every man his due', according to the famous expression of Ulpian, a Roman jurist of the third century. In reality, however, this classical definition does not specify what 'due' is to be rendered to each person. What man needs most cannot be guaranteed to him by law. In order to live life to the full, something more intimate is necessary that can be granted only as a gift: we could say that man lives by that love which only God can communicate since He created the human person in His image and likeness. Material goods are certainly useful and required - indeed Jesus Himself was concerned to heal the sick, feed the crowds that followed Him and surely condemns the indifference that even today forces hundreds of millions into death through lack of food, water and medicine - yet 'distributive' justice does not render to the human being the totality of his 'due'. Just as man needs bread, so does man have even more need of God. St. Augustine notes: if 'justice is that virtue which gives everyone his due ... where, then, is the justice of man, when he deserts the true God?'

"The Evangelist Mark reports the following words of Jesus, which are inserted within the debate at that time regarding what is pure and impure: 'There is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him. ... What comes out of a man is what defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts'. Beyond the immediate question concerning food, we can detect in the reaction of the Pharisees a permanent temptation within man: to situate the origin of evil in an exterior cause. Many modern ideologies deep down have this presupposition: since injustice comes 'from outside', in order for justice to reign, it is sufficient to remove the exterior causes that prevent it being achieved. This way of thinking - Jesus warns - is ingenuous and short-sighted. Injustice, the fruit of evil, does not have exclusively external roots; its origin lies in the human heart, where the seeds are found of a mysterious co-operation with evil. With bitterness the Psalmist recognises this: 'Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me'.

Indeed, man is weakened by an intense influence, which wounds his capacity to enter into communion with the other. By nature, he is open to sharing freely, but he finds in his being a strange force of gravity that makes him turn in and affirm himself above and against others: this is egoism, the result of original sin. Adam and Eve, seduced by Satan's lie, snatching the mysterious fruit against the divine command, replaced the logic of trusting in Love with that of suspicion and competition; the logic of receiving and trustfully expecting from the Other with anxiously seizing and doing on one's own, experiencing, as a consequence, a sense of disquiet and uncertainty. How can man free himself from this selfish influence and open himself to love?

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"At the heart of the wisdom of Israel, we find a profound link between faith in God who 'lifts the needy from the ash heap' and justice towards one's neighbour. The Hebrew word itself that indicates the virtue of justice, 'sedaqah', expresses this well. 'Sedaqah', in fact, signifies on the one hand full acceptance of the will of the God of Israel; on the other hand, equity in relation to one's neighbour, especially the poor, the stranger, the orphan and the widow. But the two meanings are linked because giving to the poor for the Israelite is none other than restoring what is owed to God, who had pity on the misery of His people. It was not by chance that the gift to Moses of the tablets of the Law on Mount Sinai took place after the crossing of the Red Sea. Listening to the Law presupposes faith in God who first 'heard the cry' of His people and 'came down to deliver them out of hand of the Egyptians'. God is attentive to the cry of the poor and in return asks to be listened to: He asks for justice towards the poor, the stranger, the slave. In order to enter into justice, it is thus necessary to leave that illusion of self-sufficiency, the profound state of closure, which is the very origin of injustice. In other words, what is needed is an even deeper 'exodus' than that accomplished by God with Moses, a liberation of the heart, which the Law on its own is powerless to realise. Does man have any hope of justice then?

"The Christian Good News responds positively to man's thirst for justice, as St. Paul affirms in the Letter to the Romans: 'But now the justice of God has been manifested apart from law ... the justice of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by His blood, to be received by faith'.

"What then is the justice of Christ? Above all, it is the justice that comes from grace, where it is not man who makes amends, heals himself and others. The fact that 'expiation' flows from the 'blood' of Christ signifies that it is not man's sacrifices that free him from the weight of his faults, but the loving act of God Who opens Himself in the extreme, even to the point of bearing in Himself the 'curse' due to man so as to give in return the 'blessing' due to God. But this raises an immediate objection: what kind of justice is this where the just man dies for the guilty and the guilty receives in return the blessing due to the just one? Would this not mean that each one receives the contrary of his 'due'? In reality, here we discover divine justice, which is so profoundly different from its human counterpart. God has paid for us the price of the exchange in His Son, a price that is truly exorbitant. Before the justice of the Cross, man may rebel for this reveals how man is not a self-sufficient being, but in need of Another in order to realize himself fully. Conversion to Christ, believing in the Gospel, ultimately means this: to exit the illusion of self-sufficiency in order to discover and accept one's own need - the need of others and God, the need of His forgiveness and His friendship.

"So we understand how faith is altogether different from a natural, good-feeling, obvious fact: humility is required to accept that I need Another to free me from 'what is mine', to give me gratuitously 'what is His'. This happens especially in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Thanks to Christ's action, we may enter into the 'greatest' justice, which is that of love, the justice that recognises itself in every case more a debtor than a creditor, because it has received more than could ever have been expected. Strengthened by this very experience, the Christian is moved to contribute to creating just societies, where all receive what is necessary to live according to the dignity proper to the human person and where justice is enlivened by love.

"Dear brothers and sisters, Lent culminates in the Paschal Triduum, in which this year, too, we shall celebrate divine justice - the fullness of charity, gift, salvation. May this penitential season be for every Christian a time of authentic conversion and intense knowledge of the mystery of Christ, who came to fulfil every justice. With these sentiments, I cordially impart to all of you my apostolic blessing".

MESS/LENT 2010/... VIS 100204 (1480)

Workout for the Soul in Search of God

Interview with Official from Ignatian Exercises Federation

By Antonio Gaspari

ROME, FEB. 5, 2010 (Zenit.org) Every year, a countless number of Catholics escape from their typical activities and take days to retreat into prayer following the system of the Ignatian spiritual exercises.

The Pope himself is one of these Catholics; Benedict XVI's annual spiritual exercises with the Roman Curia begin Feb. 21.

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Just prior to the Holy Father's retreat, the Italian Federation of Spiritual Exercises will hold their annual assembly. The president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, Archbishop Gianfranco Ravasi, will be one of the participants in the three-day meeting to discuss the relationship between spiritual exercises and the people of the Church.

In order to understand better the history, timeliness and modern practice of spiritual exercises, ZENIT spoke with Passionist Father Stanislao Renzi, national secretary of the federation.

ZENIT: Many young people don't even know what the spiritual exercises are or why they are done. Can you explain them briefly?

Father Renzi: It's true that many young people no longer even know what the spiritual exercises are or why they are practiced: Today youth live in a world that loves noise, not silence and recollection, and many want to be free of laws and discipline. It is difficult to speak to them of the "search for the will of God in deciding their own life." However, there are many [young adults] -- between 20 and 30 years old -- who do the spiritual exercises by assiduously attending courses in retreat houses, at times on weekends. The representatives [of these retreats] offer the young people the possibility to pray and to reflect individually or in community, so that they discern their choices in life and make their own spiritual journey in the Church. The courses are open to all young people who wish to make their own lives mature according to God's plan.

It should also be remembered that, according to St. Ignatius, the spiritual exercises are not a time of study or of simple recollection and prayer. They are a search: "As walking and running are physical exercises, so any form of preparing and disposing the soul to get rid of all disordered affections and, after being rid of them, to seek the will of God in deciding on one's own life, for the salvation of one's soul, is called spiritual exercises." (Es. Sp. Ann.1). ZENIT: Can you tell us the history of the spiritual exercises? When did they begin? What does the Bible say in this respect? Who are the saints who practiced the spiritual exercises?

Father Renzi: Spiritual exercises were already done by the Desert Fathers, but those we call the classic exercises go back to St. Ignatius of Loyola, who began to write them in a book in 1522 and perfected them in 1548. The book begins the exercises by posing first fundamental questions: For what has God created us?

The object of the exercises, in St. Ignatius' thought, is to order one's life according to God's plan, as man was created to serve God and only through this can he attain salvation.

He recommended that the exercises be done in a place other than one's usual environment. There were in fact "houses of exercises," where silence and stillness helped the exercises to be made.

St. Ignatius took from the Bible the ideas for the gradual composition of the book of spiritual exercises, in which are reflected his feelings when finding the secret to discern the will of God. Hence the Bible is a fundamental text for all types of spiritual exercises.

It would take a long time to find all the passages of the Bible that [could be referred] to the exercises. I find one concretely in Psalm 118:47-64. The Psalmist tells the Lord he has scrutinized his ways and will direct his steps to the Commandments; he says he is prepared to keep the secrets of the Lord. Finally he asks the Lord to show him his will, given that the earth is full of the Lord's love. Analogous is the itinerary of the one doing the exercises, who revises his own life to direct it in the sense of the will of God.

Other references might be the Virgin Mary, who meditated in her heart everything that happened around her. Mary, in fact, listened to and meditated the Scriptures, linking them to Jesus' words and to the events she went discovering in her history in relation with her Son. Another is Jesus' invitation to the disciples to withdraw in solitude to rest, which is spiritually salutary. Finally, the reference to the Scriptures in the conversation with the disciples of Emmaus, so that they understand what happened in his Death and Resurrection. St. Ignatius' exercises go over the whole life of Jesus as it is narrated in the Gospels.

In addition to St. Ignatius, many saints practiced the spiritual exercises as a renewal of Christian life. I will mention only a few: St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Paul of the Cross, St. Alphonsus Mary Liguori. All were tireless in preaching and in the confessional as ministers of God's mercy, helping men to find themselves, to struggle against sin and to advance on the way of the spiritual life.

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ZENIT: In a world such as today's which is so secularised, what reasons do you give to promote and practice spiritual exercises?

Father Renzi: [Citing Benedict XVI,] secularization, which often becomes secularism, abandoning the positive meaning of the secular, harshly tests the Christian life of the faithful and pastors. ... Today it is a providential challenge to which convincing answers must be given to man's questions and hopes. Spiritual exercises, insofar as [they are a time of] listening to the Word of God dwelled upon for a long time, allow one to discern the will of God and, conforming oneself to it, to overcome the mentality in which God is absent and, at the same time, to apply oneself to living in communion with God and with neighbor. For this reason the Federation of Spiritual Exercises promotes the exercises and urges those in charge to plan exercises every year for each category of persons: priests, religious, laity, young people, the elderly, with a view to the renewal of Christian life, to give an answer to the serious challenges posed by secularised society and religious indifference.

"Don't ever forget that the exercises are an insistent petition, which the Church addresses not only to its sacred ministers, to men and women religious, to all consecrated persons, but also to those who wish to enter into themselves, to dedicate time to God with their soul open to the hope of finding him on their way, to love him and follow him more" (John Paul II, Audience to FIES on the 25th anniversary of its foundation). In regard to the present importance of the exercises, Paul VI expressed it thus: "The practice of the exercises constitutes an invigorating and restorative pause for the spirit, in the midst of the dissipations of chaotic modern life, but also a school that even today is irreplaceable to introduce souls to greater intimacy with God, to the love of virtue and to the science of life, as gift of God and as response to his call."

In 1967 the bishops of Triveneto, Italy, wrote a letter on the "Validity of the Spiritual Exercises," and they recommended "perseverance in this apostolate, which day by day shows itself to be more important."

Without excluding the determination to experience ways that are adapted to our times, we insist "on the classic structure of the Ignatian Exercises, so valid and providential in their climate of reflection and profound silence"

Pietro Schiavone, S.J., "Il Progetto del Padre," pp. 12-13

The Deep End – *Morality Genes:*

After twenty years of research and God knows how much expense it's finally on the market: the blue rose. Not available in Nature, it's the product of genetic manipulation. Someone, obviously not given to flowery language, has rather prosaically named it Applause. Marketed as a special occasion gift, for wedding anniversaries, birthdays and the likes, it retails at about €22 per stem. That should weed out the true romantics from the common garden variety, don't you think?

What's that got to do with Lent? Nothing, really! I was just thinking that even with the impressive dedication and considerable resources that went into manufacturing this blushing freak of nature, you could wait until you were blue in the face before you'd see genetics modify a human being in to a better person. The day of the morality gene isn't just around the corner.

So, for those sensible enough to want to be a better person what more effective way to go about it than by listening to what Paul says in today's Second Reading: The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart. (Rom 10:8-13) Lent is a time for listening. There's much sacrifice involved in listening well: sacrifice of time, emotional comfort and the luxury of aloofness. Is it going too far to say that those who don't listen to God's word can't listen to anyone else's?

What better way then, than to start Lent than by tuning in to God's word as we listen to our heart express its deepest desire. God's word, our heart? A rose by any other name ...

Fr. Tom Cahill SVD, Divine Word Missionaries, Donamon, Co Roscommon (tomcee@eircom.net)

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – *Luke 4:1-13:*

1. Jesus was led by the Spirit into what proved to be a wilderness experience. When you look back on times when you hit a low point, can you see the presence of the Spirit of God in some of them?
2. Jesus is on the verge of starting his public ministry. In the temptations we can see his struggle to say 'yes' to the mission given him by God. Perhaps some of your important decisions have been preceded by a time of anxiety and worry. What helped you to say 'yes' to risky but hope-filled invitations in your life?
3. Behind each of the devil's invitations was a basic temptation to lose trust in God. How have you been tempted in this way? What helped you to hold on to trust in God?
4. One can enter into the temptations singly and ask:
 - How have I been tempted to give priority to bodily needs and satisfactions?
 - How have I been tempted to a selfish use of power?
 - How have I been tempted to seek to be the centre of attention?

John Byrne OSA (john@orlagh.ie)

Questions people ask:

- Q. In the temptations of Jesus, how could the devil claim that all the kingdoms of the earth belonged to him and that he had power to give them to anyone he chose?
- A. The devil's claim was a downright lie, no bother to Satan who was called the 'father of lies' by Jesus. Every temptation is based on a lie, a false promise. The most successful lie is the half-truth: the falsehood is camouflaged by something attractive or desirable. Perhaps a good plan for Lent would be a resolution to be totally honest with yourself, with others and with God. 'The truth will set you free.'

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