

During this Lenten season, let us be especially mindful of the courage displayed by our forebears and find ways to share our faith with others. —LHF

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice; and from all want of charity,

Good Lord, deliver us.

For many of us, Lent means embracing certain disciplines. Some may say that tradition is outdated, that it is better to “take on” something. Perhaps.

However we choose to observe Lent, the key is to do something. Jesus went into the wilderness for forty days, preparing himself for the rigors of ministry. Solid footing for him involved solitude, fasting, and rejecting temptation.

Moses prayed and fasted before he climbed Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. Sarah faced thirty-five years of wilderness trials before she gave birth to Isaac, the joy of her life and the future of Israel. Hildegard of Bingen, the twelfth-century mystic, fasted so that she could see more clearly visions of the Divine.

Sacrifice is more than a thread through biblical history. It is a solid pillar. Through discipline we gain inner strength so that we are stronger in trying times and better equipped to follow the One who truly leads.

For those who take on something extra in Lent: if it works, go for it. But for others of us, additional duties threaten to chip away at our souls. Sometimes purpose and clarity fade away like a fizzling firecracker when the “to-do” list becomes too long.

And *that* is where the temptations—things like pride and hypocrisy and vainglory (great word!) are most likely to strike—when we run the race while trying to keep too many plates spinning.

God, grant that we may learn to do more with less, stripped away of all that is nonessential for life in your Son. —LHF

First Sunday in Lent

From all inordinate and sinful affections; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

Good Lord, deliver us.

The world, the flesh, and the devil—the classic and unholy trinity over and against the gifts of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is a parallelism wherein each dark deceit comes as a twist of the true.