

LENTEN JOY

By Sister Ann

We tend to think of Lent as the miserable period in the Church's calendar, and understandably: we begin the season by wearing ashes in remembrance of our own mortality and end it by retracing the steps of Jesus to the Cross; the Church encourages us to reflect on our distance from God and to address the root causes of our sinfulness by the uncomfortable means of prayer, fasting and almsgiving; we sing more restrained music at Mass and the priest wears sombre purple. But this is very far from being the whole story: the breviary talks of "this joyful season" of Lent, and, at least in the Northern Hemisphere, nature seems to confirm this: signs of new life are everywhere as the darkness of winter gradually gives way to the radiance of spring. Here are some challenging but wise words about how to find joy in our observance of Lent, to see it not as a burden but as a gift, from a great spiritual writer of the last century:

"Humility and joy go together. If we think of the sacrifices we make as something that we are doing, of ourselves, we are going in the wrong direction, and in the effort to live up to the plan we have set ourselves, we may well become thin-lipped, gloomy, hard. St Francis, when he gave up everything to God, even his clothes, burst into song; because his nakedness was not a feat of human endurance, but a liberation of spirit, a falling into the arms of God".

(From the Son's Course, by Gerald Vann, OP)

This is a cause of real joy, especially for those of us who habitually fail to stick to the good resolutions we make on Ash Wednesday. The point of all our penance, our prayer, fasting and almsgiving, is not to earn God's favour, but to remind ourselves of our need for God's healing, our longing, to fall, like St Francis, into the arms of the God who is our heart's desire. And that is shown up particularly clearly when we fall short of our self-imposed goals, because it is then that we can ask God to pick us up again. In his mercy, he always will. An ancient Lenten hymn puts it very well:

*The day is come, the accepted day
When grace like nature flowers anew
Trained by thine arm a surer way
Rejoice we in our spring time too.*

Have a holy – and a happy – Lent!



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 9 March - First Sunday of Lent

CALENDAR

Sunday 9	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
	8.00 Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
	9.00 Sung Latin Mass
	11.00 Sung English Mass
Monday 10	12.30 Mass
Tuesday 11	1.05 Mass
Wednesday 12	12.30 Exposition
	1.05 Mass
Thursday 13	1.05 Mass
Friday 14	12.30 Stations of the Cross
	1.05 Mass
	7.30 Mass
Saturday 15	1.05 Mass
	4.30 Confessions
	6.00 Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 16	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
	<i>No Extraordinary Form Mass</i>
	9.00 Sung Latin Mass
	11.00 Sung English Mass

FAIRTRADE BREAKFAST

Today, between the 9.00 and 11.00 Masses, an opportunity to have a good breakfast sourced from Fair-trade items. Please come along and support this important initiative. You are welcome to bring contributions — contact Imogen Sutton on ics26.

FRIDAY 7.30 MASS

The Mass will be celebrated this Friday, and the bar will be open afterwards.

CRUMBS ON FRIDAY

Straight after the 7.30pm Mass, a 4-minute explanation of things we do, but don't know why we do them. This week: Sr Ann on *What are Stations of the Cross?*

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

There will be a full schedule of Masses next weekend (but note, there will be no 8.00 Extraordinary Form Mass). From Sunday 23 March the holiday timetable begins. Please keep an eye on the timetable.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

The funeral of Terence Patrick Waldron, Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson, will take place at Fisher House at the 1.05 Mass on Wednesday 19 March..

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

An evening of poetry, on the theme of the Stations, on Sunday 9 March, in the chapel, with drinks afterwards in the Great Chamber.

CATHOLICISM FOR THE CURIOUS

Fr Mark will lead a discussion at 1.15pm on Monday in the Fisher Room, on *Indulgences*

GRADUATE SOCIETY

There will be a bar evening on Wednesday at 8.00pm

FISHER DINNER

The annual Dinner of the Fisher Society takes place on 12 June; £32 non-drinking ticket, £39.50 for drinking. Please give names to Michael Loy this weekend, or sign up on the list in the vestibule.

RETREAT TO WORTH

The annual retreat to Worth takes place 21—23 March, cost £60 unwaged, £100 waged. There is a sign-up list outside the chapel. Contact Anna Webb (aew64).

CAMBRIDGE FOOD BANK

There will be a collection this weekend for the bank which provides food for local people in crisis. Please donate something from the list in the vestibule. The food-stuffs will be collected on Monday.

SAINTS AND SCONES

Sr Ann leads a discussion on saints, over cream tea, on Sunday at 4.30pm in her study. This week : *Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II.*

PAPAL MAPLE? DULCE DOMINICANA?

Do you want a *General Absolution?* Can you take a *St Januarius?* Submissions to the Catholic Cocktail book are growing—but please keep them coming. See Fr Mark.

STUDENT CROSS PILGRIMAGE

Join a week-long pilgrimage to Walsingham during Holy Week, walking c.15 miles each day. Details from Helen Oxenham ho238

MARTYRS' PILGRIMAGE

On Saturday 15 March, a day pilgrimage to London, leaving from outside Fisher House at 8.00am and returning at 7.10. We will visit the cell of St John Fisher in the Tower of London, the cell of St Henry Walpole, and have a tour of the London Charterhouse, home of St John Houghton. Cost £30. Please see poster for more details.

COLLECTION LAST WEEK
£401.00

SENIOR MEMBERS' LENTEN GROUP

A discussion group on *Evangelii Gaudium* will meet during Lent at Fisher House, beginning on 11 March 5.00pm. The session will last about an hour. There are a few copies of the Exhortation available, priced £4.95—it can also be downloaded from the Vatican website.

ROMERO CELEBRATION

On Friday 21 March, 7.00pm, in the Fisher Room, Fr Martin Maier SJ, parish priest in El Salvador, will speak on Archbishop Romero's witness to the joy of the Gospel.

EASTER TRIDUUM

The liturgies of Holy Week will be celebrated at Fisher House:
Maundy Thursday 7.00pm Mass and watching at the Altar of Repose.
Good Friday 3.00pm Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion.
Easter Vigil 4.00am followed by breakfast.
Please check the noticeboard for other liturgies.

Fr Mark, Fr Kevin and Sr Ann wish you a restful holiday, and a blessed Easter celebration.