



TESS Newsletter

Accordance to Article 7  
Section 3 of its Constitution

No. 04 of 7th March 2016  
Episode 142

“ Turning Possibilities into Realities ”

## Building a Global Movement for Change [UNSG]: The Promise (part 74)



### "Working Hard at Working Smart" (part XCIV)

## Spiritual Values: Praying and Preparing for Lent



**"Lent is a time to renew wherever we are in that process that I call the divine therapy. It's a time to look what our instinctual needs are, look at what the dynamics of our unconscious are."**

Fr. Thomas Keating, O.C.S.O.

Founder of Centering Prayer, movement and contemplative outreach ltd.

(Time, Process, Therapy)

## The future we want: The Promise: The Force Beyond

### Praying and Preparing for lent

[www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html](http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html)

#### What to do before Lent begins.

Anything worth doing is worth preparing for. Just imagine that this Lent is going to be different from every other Lent we've experienced. Imagine that there will be many graces offered me this year. Let's even imagine that God is going to help transform our lives, with greater freedom, greater joy, deeper desires for love and service.

If we want it, we will choose it. Lent will be this wonderful season of grace for us if we give ourselves to it. And, we will give ourselves to it to the degree we really want it badly. So, in these days before Lent, we need to prepare our hearts. We need to prepare by realizing how much we want to grow in freedom, how much we need to lighten our spirits and experience some real joy, and how much some parts of our lives really need changing.

So, preparing our hearts is a process of preparing our desires. This means practicing our sense of anticipation. If I imagine Lent as an "ordeal" or a time I dread in some way, then I've already pre-disposed myself to not get very much out of it. These days before Lent are a time to start anticipating something wonderful that is about to happen.

#### Our Focus: On what God wants to give us.

Our sense of excitement and anticipation will grow more easily if we begin to imagine what God wants to give us. There is really something coming that we can truly look forward to. If we get too focused on ourselves, and what we are going to do or not do, we could risk missing the gift God wants to give us. We have to keep aware of the fact that grace comes from God. This is about God's great desire to bless us. Then, it is easier for us to imagine that we really **want** to do is place ourselves in a space to **receive** what God wants to give us.

#### Not starting from a dead stop.

Taking some time to get ready for Lent will ensure that we aren't going to miss the first week or two of Lent, because we are just getting started. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, but we want to be ready to really take off on that day, rather than just beginning to think about Lent on that day. Part of what makes a vacation or a special anniversary so special is the build-up to it.



Before we get to Ash Wednesday, we should start asking ourselves some questions and we should start with some preparations. "What does God want to give me this year?" This question may require that I slow down a bit and listen to my inner spirit. For example, even if I'm very busy, I realize I'm hungry when I hear my stomach start "growling." "What am I going to be doing on Ash Wednesday?" Too often, Ash Wednesday is like every other day, except that I manage to get to church and get ashes on my forehead. Is there anything else I can do on Ash Wednesday? How will fasting and abstaining happen for me, for my family on that special day?

#### Lent is not something I need to do alone.

If I have a spouse, or children, or some close friends, or distant e-mail companions, I can begin now to talk about how we will support each other in this Lenten journey. The anticipation and the preparation is transformed with the companionship of family and close friends. We shouldn't be deterred

by the fear that our spouse or children or friends "won't be into it." Jesus said, "Fear is useless; what's needed is trust." Let's begin now to tell others about our desires. Let's help support others' expectations. Let's help others see that Lent doesn't have to be something I avoid, and certainly can't be reduced to "giving up candy." We can help our loved ones to begin to imagine what they could receive from God in these days.

Ash Wednesday is great place to start with our planning. "What are we going to eat?" We shouldn't be embarrassed if we really haven't fasted in a long time, or perhaps ever before. We can plan to **intentionally** have only one full meal on Ash Wednesday. We can make that meal very meaningful and symbolic.

**Getting ready, means getting my house ready, too. And, it can means lots of choices.**

In the days before Lent, we can read some of the resources here that give concrete ideas of ways to get ready to begin. Choosing Lent, Acting Lent gives a number of ways we can enter Lent with our whole selves, - as body-persons, who use our senses to help us experience things deeply. The symbols in our home, and the concrete choices we make can **shape** the way we will begin Lent, as individuals and as a family.

**And, it doesn't take much time.**

It doesn't a lot of time to prepare for the beginning of Lent. It just takes desire and focus. God can do so much with that. We can give God more of a space to touch our hearts if we begin to establish some simple patterns. We could wake up each morning, and for something like a half a minute to a minute, stand by the edge of our beds, and just ask the Lord for the grace to let this day be one in which I long for the beginning of Lent. Perhaps we need to ask for specific helps or graces to get ready to begin Lent. Whatever we try to say, our Lord can understand the Spirit trying to speak through our simple words. And all it takes is the time to find and put on our slippers. And each night, in the days ahead, we can practice giving thanks to God before I go to bed. This simple pattern, in the morning and evening can stir our spirits to look forward to and prepare for Lent, as a season of grace.

May our Lord bless us all on this journey ahead.

## 13 Inspirational Quotes that will Change Your Life

*"Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions."* Dalai Lama

*"If you see someone without a smile give them yours."*  
Dolly Parton

*"I believe there's an inner power that makes winners or losers. And the winners are the ones who really listen to the truth of their hearts."* Sylvester Stallone

*"The great gift of human beings is that we have the power of empathy."* Meryl Streep

*"The image is one thing and the human being is another. It's very hard to live up to an image, put it that way."* Elvis Presley

*"I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.'!"* Muhammad Ali

*"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."* Warren Buffett

*"People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel."* Maya Angelou

Quote: *"It always seems impossible until it is done."* Nelson Mandela

*"The battles that count aren't the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself—the invisible battles inside all of us—that's where it's at."*  
Jesse Owens

*"Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value."* Albert Einstein

*"You must be the change that you wish to see in the world."* Mahatma Gandhi

*"Always make a total effort, even when the odds are against you."* Arnold Palmer

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The journey continues...