



Carmelite News

Vol. 18, No.1 www.baltimorecarmel.org 410 823 7415 March – June 2011

Rending Our Hearts: Reflections for Lent

As we and our readers continue Lent and prepare our hearts to enter again with Jesus into his passion, death and resurrection, we offer some reflections on the radical challenge of the Gospel for a suffering world.

The Revolutionary Spirit

Revolution is in the air. People are risking and losing their lives so that dictators might fall, so that a new future might emerge. The noblest of this revolutionary spirit provides a perfect context for Lent, when nonviolent means are embraced in the cause of human dignity and freedom. Jesus sacrificed his life to this cause, to move hearts and minds and souls to change. His non-violent revolution was one of inclusivity, of justice, freedom, and liberation, and it was personally costly.

To enter into this spirit is to incarnate the *Memoria Passionis*, the memory of Christ's' passion. Jesus had the courage to undergo even death for the sake of all people, especially the poor and little ones. The Paschal Mystery tells the transformative power of such courage. Life springs forth, creation is renewed, a new vision holds sway. People are united even in the midst of their differences; indeed, the differences are at last understood as strength and beauty.

This Lent, let passion ignite passion. May the spirit of revolution give us courage to mobilize the energy rising up to transform our consciousness and our world.

Let the Thought Spring from Love

But I say this to you: love your enemies. Matt 5:43-44

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us that the practice of non-violence is not *only* about our actions; it is also about our inner state: *Pray for those who persecute you.* Jesus is calling us to a radically different approach to conflict, so that we may remake our world into a place of peace. It is the state of our heart that matters -- let our actions arise out of love! We can think of historic moments when this approach had dramatic effect: the Indian Independence Movement lead by Ghandi, the Civil Rights Movement lead by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and even the recent non-violent protests in Egypt. Responding to violence with love is not weakness; it is however, costly, and takes great courage and faith.

The Buddha said: "*The thought manifests as the word. The word manifests as the deed. The deed develops into habit. And the habit hardens into character. So watch the thought and its ways with care, and let it spring from love, born out of concern for all beings.*" Jesus and the Buddha - imagine how the future would look if we took this message to heart.

Imagine the Beatitudes

The crowd follows Jesus to a gentle hillside. They are about to see another dimension of this son of Joseph, the carpenter. As they've journeyed with him they've been caught up by the extraordinary healings of this remarkably ordinary man. Indeed, today they hope to see more miracles, perhaps hear a few pithy remarks, something really to knock their socks off! It is a pleasant day and they all mill around – all of them by appearance the same raggle-taggle group who wait, who have been waiting eons for something new, something...

Please share Holy Week with us.

We warmly invite you to our Holy Week services, offering a beautiful, intensive and deep experience of the mystery of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. Your presence will contribute greatly to the liturgical celebration of these sacred days. We hope you can be with us. Please see the calendar box (other side) for times.

Then he leans toward them, and then, from the youngest to the oldest they lean toward him and he begins to speak in a clear but gentle voice...Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...that's just the beginning – it's as if the crowd holds its collective breath – suddenly the world is turning upside-down!

The crowd sees and hears both the teacher Jesus and prophet Jesus, who speaks not of woe and wailing to come but of blessings that, in this hearing, are being

bestowed on the very crowd of raggle-taggle gathered before him. Jesus knows them, looks at them, leans toward them...Jesus knows us, looks at us, leans toward us right now and asks “can you imagine this?” All who mourn, all who are single-hearted, all who make peace...

We follow the crowd and especially the disciples or “learners” as they listen to old words and old promises newly told with a twist. Jesus speaks with them – are they the leaders, the lawyers, the priests? No! The crowd comprises the ones who most suffer with the oppression of a conquered land and the oppression of their own tradition. Their yearning for a new vantage point is probably quite palpable to Jesus who, after all, is a Jewish peasant.

Here comes the revolutionary message. In the midst of their poverty and powerlessness Jesus insists that they can make the choice of a lifetime. They can choose to let this dangerous law of love enter their hearts, to guide their lives. Each member of the crowd is challenged to choose life in a daily way, and each soul is empowered.

Jesus is saying that we must choose, and we must imagine. Choose life, choose love. Imagine a new future, borne from this upside-down perspective. We join the crowd and enter the fray of choice, each day, every day. Yes, we answer. Yes, we can imagine!

🌿 **Calendar** 🌿

Lenten Day of Recollection	Saturday April 2	1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.	Good Friday	April 22	
			Tenebrae	8:00 a.m.	
			Liturgy	3:00 p.m.	
Palm Sunday	April 17		Holy Saturday	April 23	
Eucharist	9:00 a.m.	Brian McDermott, S.J.	Tenebrae	8:00 a.m.	
Vespers	5:00 p.m.		Vespers	4:30 p.m.	
			Easter Vigil	9:00 p.m.	Patrick McMahon, O.Carm.
Holy Thursday	April 21		Easter Sunday	April 24	
Tenebrae	8:00 a.m.		Eucharist	11:00 a.m.	John Donahue, S.J.
Eucharist	5:30 p.m.	Brian McDermott, S.J.	Vespers	4:30 p.m.	

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Carmelite Monastery
1318 Dulaney Valley Road
Baltimore, MD 21286-1399

Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE PAID
Baltimore, MD
Permit No. 2152