

March 2nd, A.D. 2014
Quinquagesima Sunday

Meditation

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke; Chap. 18, Vss. 31 - 43

(1928 Book of Common Prayer, Pages 123 - 124)
(The People's Anglican Missal, Page A- 57)
(St. Joseph's Continuous Sunday Missal, Page 326)



Jesus Heals the Blind Man

Duccio di Buoninsegna – Siena, Tuscany, Italy. c. 1300

Gospel Meditation Summary: Jesus predicts His death and resurrection to His apostles who do not understand. He heals a blind man who cries out to Him for help.

“Thou art the God, that doeth wonders : and hast declared thy power among the people. Thou has mightily delivered thy people : even the sons of Jacob and Joseph..” - (Psalm 77)

Going to Jerusalem

Our Lord could hardly have chosen plainer words to describe His coming passion and death: *“Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on ; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death ; and the third day he shall rise again.”* The apostles look at one another, as they have so often done when Jesus speaks mysteriously. He, their Hope ... put to death? Then He will rise again? They ask, “What is he talking about?”

The apostles will soon find out what our Lord is alluding to. He already knows. He turns it all over in His mind as He walks along with them. He is walking towards Good Friday. He also walking towards Easter Day. He is walking to us ... to His new Presence in His Church. Truly, *“Thou art the God, that doeth wonders.) Ps. 77.*

Near Jericho a blind man, hearing the passing steps of Jesus and His group of followers, cries out: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” The man is excited, for he has heard of Jesus and His merciful works. How many times might he have said to himself, “If only He would come to my town!” Now, He is there. The poor blind man walks around in circles, hands outstretched, shouting in all directions: “Have mercy on me!”

The mans' cries reach the ears of our Lord. “Bring him here” Jesus says. Then He asks the man, *“What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?”* Jesus already knows the answer before the blind man speaks. *“Lord, that I may receive my sight!”* he exclaims. Jesus hears the longing in the mans' voice, He senses the Faith the man has in Him. *“Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee.”*

At once the man receives his sight, and then follows along with the crowd that, no doubt, has gathered around Jesus and His followers. He glorifies God in loud proclamations of thanksgiving, and all the people, upon seeing this miracle, also give praise to God.

Now, let let the praise of all these people, and that of the formerly blind man become our praise! Because exactly what happened then is going to take place again during this forth coming Lent. Now it is to us that Christ says, *“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem . . . The Son of Man will be put to death ; and on the third day He will rise again.”*

Receive Thy Sight

That is what Lent is all about . . . at least that's the way our Lord wants it for us. “*Behold, we go . . .*” He seems to want company. He seems to want *us* to share in, if not His actual dying, at least His sacrificial will to die. Unless we can see this fact, we are blind. More blind than the apostles to Christ's opening statement in today's Gospel . . . more blind than the blind man also in the Gospel. Worse yet, *blind without even knowing that we are blind*. The prayer of the blind man is our prayer too: “*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*”

We would do well to repeat this prayer over and over again...make it our primary prayer for this Lent, perhaps. It is sure to bring forth our Lord's consoling question: “*What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?*” He knows our answer: “*Lord, that I may receive my sight!*” We, by faith, know His reply: “*Receive thy sight.*” That, will be Easter.

O Lord Jesus, We want to follow you forever, giving glory to God. “*O be joyful in the Lord all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His Presence with a song : be ye sure that the Lord, He is God. It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves : for we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.*” (*Psalm 100 – Tract for the Mass for Quinquagesima*)

“*In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion : but rid me and deliver me in thy righteousness.*” (*Introit Psalm of Quinquagesima – Ps. 31*)

Prayer for the Day: LORD, THAT I MAY SEE !



Jesus Healing the Blind Man
El Greco - Spain 1570

4.

A Prayer for the Week

O Lord, Who hast taught us that all our doings without Charity are worth nothing ; send Thy Holy Ghost and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of Charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee.”

Poem;

“ Quinquagesima “

by

Christina Rosetti

Piteous my rhyme is,
What while I muse of love and pain,
Of love misspent,
Of love in vain,
Of love that is not loved again;
And is this all, then?
As long as time is,
Love loveth . . . time is but a span
The dalliance space of a dying man:
And is this all immortals can?
The gain were small then.
Love loves forever,
And finds a sort of joy in pain,
And gives with naught to take again,
And loves too well to end in vain:
Is the gain small, then?
Love laughs at Never,
Outlives our life, exceeds the span,
Appointed to mere mortal man;
All which love is, and does and can,
Is all in all then.



Christina Georgina Rossetti – English Poetess

*Christina Georgina Rossetti; (1830 -1894) was born and raised in London, England of an Italian expatriate family. A prolific poetess, she was also deeply religious. A dedicated and devout Anglo-Catholic who herself did redemptive and rehabilitation work amongst the “fallen women” in the London slums. Her most famous work is the Christmas hymn: “**In the Bleak Mid -Winter**” The Anglican Church honors her with a feast day of April 27'*

Feasts, Fasts, and Other Things

Quinquagesima

And a few concluding thoughts on the Pre-Lenten Season

An established principal of liturgical procedure is to graduate the expression of a festal mystery. We observed this graduation in good example during Advent; in an ever clearer light the Church showed us the coming Messiah until He stood (or, should I say ' lay') before us in royal splendor at Bethlehem. Something similar may be noted in the season before Easter; here, however, there are three levels, and each one has its own inner development.

First Level: *The Pre-Lenten Season called “Septuagesima-tide”* - a time of *invitation*. The Church invites us to make good use of the great season of penance. We already have observed the progression inherent in the liturgical formats of the three Sundays of *Septuagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Quinquagesima*. In their external structures, the Pre-Lenten Season resembles the *tempus per annum* (*The time through the year*), except with the *Alleluia* and *Gloria in excelsis* missing.

Second Level - Lent, the season of *fasting and penance*. This can clearly be seen in both the Prayer Book and the Missal beginning on *Ash Wednesday*. In the Office, it begins with the First Sunday in Lent (and not until then does the Ordinary of Lent appear) and closes with the Saturday after *Laetare (Rose) Sunday*. A good description of this period can be seen in the words of the Proper Preface of Lent:” ... *that by our bodily fasting, thou dost curb our sinfulness, dost raise our minds from things of earth, dost renew our strength and reward us with manifold blessings...*” It is then, dear friends, a season of inner purification and spiritual renewal.

The deeper or mystical impact centers on the conflict between spirits, the gigantic struggle between light and darkness. In this battle, we can distinguish two phases, one defensive and the other offensive. In the first two weeks of Lent, Christ and the Church seem to be on the defensive; in the next two weeks they proceed to attack. For these two phases the Gospels of the first and third Sundays in Lent give us the signal. On the first Sunday in Lent, Satan confronts Christ and abandons the assault only after repeated advances; on the third Sunday in Lent, Our Lord takes the initiative, He is the stronger and conquers the strong. On our own personal battlefields, we too, must turn from passive resistance to open attack upon the enemy, namely, the world, the flesh , and the devil ... all who will conspire to ruin our Lenten experience and blunt any spiritual progress.

The Third Level - Passiontide. This period is consecrated exclusively to *the memory of Christ's sufferings*. As early as the Monday after *Laetare (Rose) Sunday* the liturgy begins to speak of the suffering of Jesus. In the chants of the Offices our ears sense the laments from the lips of Christ. With *Passion Sunday* the liturgy abandons its reserve and openly shows us the sacred passion.

At the very outset, we must take positive steps to acquire the spirit of Lent. Through the vestibule of the *Pre-Lenten Season of Septuagesima-tide* we enter the sanctuary of the sacred Easter season. What is the purpose of this portion of the Church year? What can it give us? It gives divine life and in divine life we have the essence and the end of all Christian piety. Objectively, this life was won by Christ through a hard fight in His bitter passion ; subjectively, it is now bestowed in baptism to the neophytes of the Church (Catechumens), and renewed in the *second baptism* as received through the Sacrament of *Penance* to those within the church.

Lent is the time *par excellence* for interior purification. In the early centuries of the Church, sinners were obliged to do public penance during Lent; in a solemn penitential service they received the

6.)

mourner's garb of sackcloth and ashes on Ash Wednesday and were then on excluded from community services until Maundy Thursday. By way of exception they were allowed to attend the Mass of the catechumens.

The Pre-Lenten Season of *Septuagesima -tide* is coming to a close, and we will be entering into the season of *Great Lent* as it was called by our ancestors. Let us prepare ourselves to take on the challenges that this time of penance and purification offers to us. Let us make an effort ,taking to good advantage all the services offered to us by Holy Mother Church this Lent.

Let us submit ourselves to humble mortification of all those senses that cause us to sin and drift away from our Lord. Through mortification, purification, and Reconciliation we can joyfully stand with our risen Lord on Easter Day and welcome once again the great *Alleluias* that were removed from our prayers when we began the Lenten experience on that Saturday before we entered *Septuagesima-tide*.

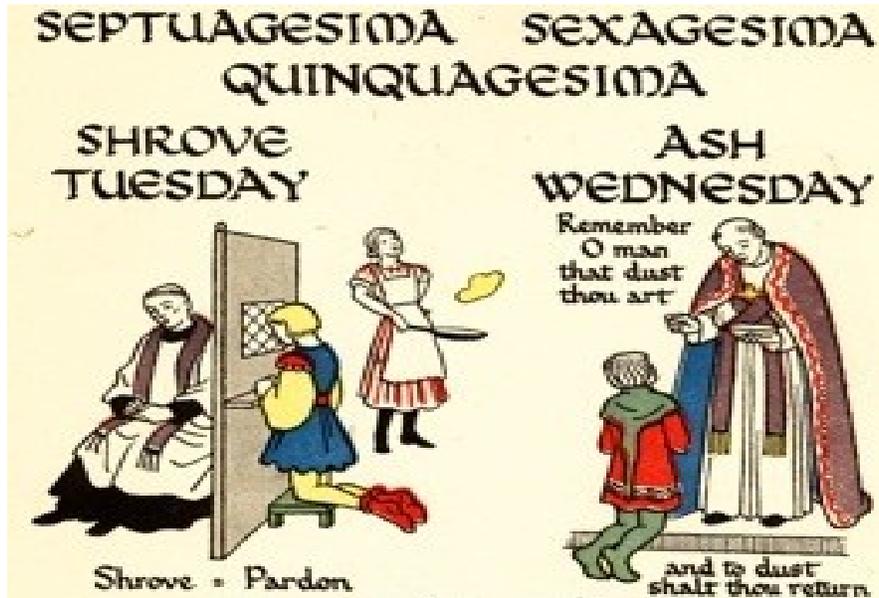
Shrovetide

The last days of the Pre-Lenten Season (Septuagesima-tide) blend themselves into a very short period called *Shrovetide*. I would be remiss in my duties if I didn't say a few words about this aspect of pre-Lent ... especially on behalf of our guests who may not yet be familiar with the traditional kalendar as followed at the Priory, and by other Anglo-Catholics & Traditional Roman Catholics.

The Lenten season begins after Vespers (or evening Prayer) on Shrove Tuesday, the last of the days of *Shrovetide*, traditionally the time set aside for confessing sins and being granted absolution before the long period of spiritual preparation and abstinence from certain foods during the *Great Lenten Fast*. When used as an adjective in this context, '*shrove*' is what is called an alternate past participle * for '*shriven*', from the verb, '*to shrive*' ... meaning ' to write'. (Compare the modern German *schreiben*, and the Dutch *schrijven*.) In Medieval England a priest would hear confession and, in theory, if not in practice, write down, or prescribe, an appropriate penance (Penances ,back then, were very creative, yet practical in their mission to reform the penitant!) . After the absolution, the person was said to have been '*shriven*'.

Shrove Tuesday was the last day for preparing dishes containing eggs, milk, and cooking fat or butter; foods forbidden during Lent. These ingredients were therefore used up in pancakes or similar recipes. In France the day is called *mardi gras*, ' Fat Tuesday'. (It is said that a tower of butter was presented in Rouen Cathedral made from the monies saved by not using butter in Lent. - *wonderful, but what did they do with it?! - Ed.*) The celebration of *Mardi Gras* made its way from France to wherever French settlements were throughout the world, including the Louisiana territories, and even in Franco-American settlements in Northern New England. Shrove Tuesday was also the last opportunity for eating meat (Latin: *carnis*: '*flesh*'), hence '*carnival*' and related words in the Romance languages (French: *carnaval*, Italian; *carnevale* or *carnelasciare*, medieval Spanish: *carnestolendas*, Catalanian: *carnestoles*), conveying the idea of ' taking away' or ' ceasing to eat' meat, became synonymous with revelry associated with the last opportunity for self-indulgence before taking on the rigors of Lent. Today, the concept of *carnival* has strayed far from its original intent, when it was observed within a Christian society. Sadly, the world has has taken it and transformed it into a hedonistic celebration, with no intention of any penitential follow-up.

7.)



Feasts, Fasts, and Other Things; from *“The Chipmunks Nutshell Library”* presented by *Br. A. Chip Monk, O.S.B.*
A munk of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory, in Raymond, Maine.

** My high school English teacher would be pleased that I remembered what she taught us during those long hours of English class. Contrary to her declarations that I 'hibernated' during her class, I would like to believe that something sank in and stuck ! - Br. Chip.*

Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory
4 Shaw Road
Raymond, Maine 04071

**PLEASE NOTE: PUBLIC SUNDAY MASSES WILL RESUME IN THE SPRING.
CONVENTUAL MASSES ONLY FOR THE WINTER.**

KALENDAR



“Brethren, If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” (1 Cor. Ch. XII) **-Chapter Reading ; Second Vespers of Quinquagesima**

Quinquagesima a.k.a. L

Sunday, March 2nd --- Quinquagesima (L) *Comm. St. Chad, Bp. & Conf. (7th cent.)*
Monday, March 3rd *Comm. St. Cunnegundis, Nun, O.S.B. (11th cent.) - Humble Submission.*
Tuesday, March 4th Shrove Tuesday *Comm. St. Casmir, Conf. (15th cent.)*
Wednesday, March 5th ... ASH WEDNESDAY – Lent Begins Today (Great Fast Begins)
Thursday, March 6th *feria in Lent.*
Friday, March 6th - (Fast & Abstinence) *Comm. Sts. Perpetua & Felicity Myrs. (3rd cent.)*
Saturday, March 7th *Comm. St. Thomas Aquinas, C. & Doct. (13th cent.)*
Sunday, March 8th ... Quadragesima- First Sunday in Lent - (Lent I)

KEY: *Ab. = Abbot, Abs. = Abbess, Ap. = Apostle, Bp. = Bishop, C. or Conf. = Confessor, Dcn. = Deacon, Doct. = Doctor of the Church, K = King, M. = Monk, Myr. = Martyr, N. = Nun, P= Priest Po. = Pope, Q. = Queen, Vir. = Virgin,*



Cutting Wood in Winter – by Abel Grimmer, Flemish, c. 1615.

We take leave from our artist-friend, Mr. Grimmer with this final winter painting. It's interesting to see how much times have not changed in some ways. Here in Maine, the regular practice is to go into the woods during the present winter to cut down the trees that will provide heat for the next winter or the one after, depending upon the type of tree and how well ahead "in our wood" we are! The snow provides means for skidding out the trees easier than the mud and undergrowth, which are a part of the warmer time...not to mention the bugs! These fellows have been fortunate not to have to venture into the woods to get their fuel ... but they have only axes, mauls, and wedges with which to cut, fell and split. One of the best things to come out of the 20th century was the chain saw ... try gettin' in a few cords of wood the way these guys are doing if you don't think so!

P.S. - We'll see more of Mr. Grimmer's paintings come Summer-time.

- Fr. k.l.l. +

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR BENEFACTORS TO HELP FINANCIALLY WITH THE ANIMALS. IF YOU OR SOMEONE THAT YOU KNOW WOULD LIKE TO HELP, SIMPLY MARK YOUR CHECK "FOR THE ANIMALS". IT WILL BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED AND DEEPLY APPRECIATED....THANK YOU!

P A X