March 23rd, A.D. 2014

**Third Sunday in Lent**
( Quadragesima-tide )

**THE MEDITATION**

*The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke ; Chap, 11, Vss. 14 - 28*

( 1928 Book of Common Prayer, Page 129 )
( The People's Anglican Missal, Page A - 98 )
( St. Joseph's Continuous Sunday Missal - ( 1958 ed.), Pgs. 379 - 381 )

Jesus casting out a devil
*12th Century Manuscript page from a Monastery Lectionary*
2.

**Gospel Meditation Summary:** Jesus confounds critics who accuse Him of casting out devils in the name and power of Beelzebub.

“...The statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart, sweeter also than the honeycomb: moreover thy servant keepeth them.” - (Psalm 19 - Offertory verse for The Third Sunday in Lent)

**Blessed Are They**

In today's Meditation, we are going to pass over most of this gospel to concentrate on the last scene. Jesus has driven a devil out from a man who had been made dumb, and now the man speaks. Some of the people observing this act marvel at it, while some others object absurdly that Jesus and Satan are in partnership together! (There will always be cynics and scoffers in every age, ours holds no monopoly despite its touts of “enlightenment”!) Jesus is superb in responding to that accusation: “If Satan is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? If I am casting out devils by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you . . . he who is not with me is against me.”

All this builds up to that wonderful display of enthusiasm on the part of a nameless woman of the crowd and an equally wonderful lesson in Christian living for all of us.

This woman had been watching Jesus. She had seen the miracle and heard the Him rebuke His enemies. Jesus had been growing on her from just a mere curiosity perhaps, to someone much, much more. She can no longer hold back her conviction about Jesus. She shouts aloud the thought that had been forming in her mind throughout this event; “Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the breasts that nursed thee!” Few tributes to our Lord and His Blessed Mother since that day have ever equaled this one in its intensity of love, feeling, and beauty of imagery. It seem confusing to us is that Jesus then seems to rebuke the woman. What does He mean by those mysterious words: “Rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.”

Is Jesus saying, that to hear His word and keep it is a greater thing than being His Mother in the flesh? It would seem so; and if that is the case, what a vision of life Jesus is giving to all of us! Of course, Mary excels more than anyone else in meeting this standard of our Lord, because no one has ever approached her perfection in doing His will, in hearing the word of God and keeping it. Jesus seems to say that it was Mary doing God's Will rather than her physical motherhood that made her great.

**Who Hear the Word**

We should, without a doubt, be overjoyed at the new meaning Jesus' teaching gives to our lives. We can hear His word, and with His help we can keep it. We can do His will. We can say with Mary, “Be it done unto me according to thy word”, and if we try to follow through on that with all sincerity and honesty, holding back nothing of our own wills, Christ's words can be true of us: “Rather, blessed is he who hears the word of God and keeps it.”
3.

How this teaching can transform daily living and suffering, O Lord! A person might be a hopeless victim of cancer, feeling doomed to an early death, or an elderly person crippled with arthritis after years of labor, plagued with the feeling that they have outlived their usefulness. A young person having been badly crippled from recent war injuries might say, “what kind of future do I have in this condition?”

The words our our Blessed Lord come to these people and to us straight and clear: “Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it!” If we take that word of His and keep it and try with all that is in us, even in our weak and human way, to make it the single and underlying principle of our lives, then we become new beings, every one of us bearing a remarkable resemblance to our Lord and His Blessed Mother, Mary in faith and obedience to the Father.

Think on this and we must conclude how wonderfully remarkable this is: Jesus has said it, and it must be true.

O Lord, now is the time for us to make the decisive step. Now . . . this Lent. Our baptisms made us one with He that said: “My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me.” (St. John; Ch. 4, Vs. 34) We have heard Your word. Help us, Dear Lord, to keep it. “Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and in misery.” (Psalm 25, Introit Prayer for the Mass for the Third Sunday in Lent.)

A LENTEN EXERCISE: How often when we are at Mass or other services do we hear, but do not listen? How often do we concern ourselves about 'keeping up' with the Mass or the service from our Prayer Books instead of actually listening to the words that are being said, prayed, or preached? Do we become annoyed when we can't keep up or lose our place? Do we let ourselves become distracted and allow ourselves to become confused (which can lead to irritation) when a visiting priest celebrates Mass a little differently than how we are used to having it celebrated regularly?

Try just listening to the Mass or the service next time. Set your book aside and let the sound of the words permeate your heart and soul as you receive the gifts that you are being given. You might be surprised at how suddenly fresh or even new the message seems to you. By denying the sense of sight (in reading), you become dependent upon the sense of hearing, which will lead to listening, and a deeper inner reception of the spiritual message. This tiny act of “self-denial” can produce surprising results!
4. A Prayer for the Week

Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer, before all temples, the upright heart and pure, instruct me; for Thou knowest. What in me is dark, illumine; what is low, raise and support!

Look down, O Lord, from Thy Heavenly Throne, illuminate the darkness of our night with Thy celestial brightness, and from the Sons of Light banish the deeds of darkness!

The Meditation is produced by the Benedictine Community of

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This is a free on-line ministry of our community to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please feel free to copy and pass on this meditation to anyone you feel might benefit from it. To be placed on our weekly mailing list, please contact Father Prior Kevin at: klamarre@ourladyofsevensorrows.org

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

PRIORY KALENDAR

The Third Sunday in Lent (“Quadragesima - tide”)

Week of March 23rd to March 29th - A.D. 2014

Sunday, March 23rd  Third Sunday in Lent - (Lent III) - Lenten Community Retreat begins (Please see Note).

Monday, March 24th  … Archangel Gabriel ……………………………………… Community Retreat
Tuesday, March 25th  … ANNUNCIATION OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY - St. Dismas.
Wednesday, March 26th  ………………… comm. St. Ludger, Bp. (9th cent.)  Community Retreat
Thursday, March 27th  …St. John of Damascus, Conf. & Doct. (8th cent.)  Community Retreat
Friday, March 28th  …St. John Capistrano, Conf., O.F.M. (15th cent.) - [F & A] - Community Retreat

Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare) - Lent IV

Week of March 30th to April 6th, A.D. 2014

Sunday, March 30th … Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare = Refreshment Sunday)

Community Retreat Concludes


Tuesday, April 1st … Comm. Ven. Lanzo, Prior, O.S.B. Chichester, England (12th cent.) - patience in sufferings.

Wednesday, April 2nd … comm. St. Francis de Paula, founder of Minim Order of Franciscan Hermits (16th cent.)

Thursday, April 3rd … St. Richard, Bp. & C. Chichester, England, (13th cent.)


Saturday, April 5th ….. comm. Bl. Hermann, Laybrother, O.Cist. (12th cent.) - simple in intellect, Saintly in virtue.

Sunday, April 6th ….. Passion Sunday (5th Sunday in Lent)

NOTE: The community will be making its Lenten Retreat from Sunday, March 23rd to Sunday, March 30th. We will not be receiving any visitors, or returning phone calls, or emails during that time. This week's Meditation contains the Kalendar for two weeks as there will be no Meditation E-mailing for Sunday, March 30th.

Lenten Fasting Rules (Traditional)

Fast: The taking of only one full meal (which may include meat) and two smaller meatless meals that don't equal one large meal. No eating between meals, but water, milk, tea, coffee, & juices are okay. Meat is allowed at one meal (assuming abstinence isn't also expected on a given day. Traditionally everyone over 21 years of age and under 59 years of age is bound to observe the laws of the fast. The present code of Cannon Law for Roman Catholics sets the ages of 18 – 59 as the limits.

Partial Abstinence: Meat and soup or gravy made from meat may be eaten once a day at the principal meal.

Abstinence: In both the Roman and Traditional Anglican Churches, abstinence means a refraining from eating the meat from mammals, fowl, and from soup and gravy made from them. Fish is allowed, hence Fridays have been called “Fish Fridays.” Traditionally, the laws of abstinence apply to all aged 7 and over.

Meditatio Brevis

A Brief Meditation for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, Laetare Sunday.

When we ponder the words of the Gospel for this Sunday (March 30th) “Laetare Sunday” try to pay special attention to the different reasons that made the people come to see Jesus in such numbers and resulted in the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Some of those who came were sick and desired the gift of bodily health. Others came to Christ for Divine Truth, while others came merely out of curiosity, moved by earthly motives.
6.

These three types of people can be found in churches and religious houses everywhere when the Holy Eucharist is substituted for the loaves and fishes. Some who come are penitent sinners who need the Eucharist as medicine and remedy for the maladies of their souls. Others approach the altar rail earnestly desirous of salvation, their hearts and wills set on perfection and their longing for the Bread of Heaven unaffected by secondary motives. Still others come to Communion immersed in material interests without high aspirations or noble aims. Their Communions are made simply out of habit. These leave the Communion rail just as they came. Ask yourself which class you belong to, and then resolve to stir up your soul to better preparation for reception of our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

**Penitential Acts to Consider doing this week:**

**A.** A corporal work of mercy toward a sick person.

**B.** A spiritual Communion in reparation for a past lack of proper preparation for receiving Communion.

“*I was glad when they said unto me : We will go unto the house of the Lord. Peace be in thy walls, and plentiousness within thy palaces.*” (Psalm 122; Gradual Prayer for Laetare Sunday).

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With Spring comes new “Hope”!

![Hope](image)

The priory received a new 2 week old Tunis X Dorset lamb just in time for spring! She came to us from a New Hampshire breeder and was one of twins that were both born completely blind. The brother died before they could be brought to us. Hope was very dehydrated as she had not been fed often enough and was too weak to stand. Almost one week later, she is able to get up and stand, is asking for her food and trying hay and some grain. She
will be a permanent resident here with us as she will need special one on one care all her life. We are waiting for actual spring weather to be able to get her out in the sun on grass. She is a wonderful example for us, stepping out into the darkness, as we all must do sometimes, following the voice of the shepherd. We will update you here as she progresses and we thank those of you who have been generous and made these rescues possible.....God Bless you.

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!