Lent is coming. Are You Ready?

How does this happen? It feels as though we are barely through Advent and the Christmas Season, yet Lent will be upon us in just 2 weeks! Below, Sister Patricia Geary shares her suggestions for deepening our relationship with God through scripture. No matter your personal prayer practice, we can all use a refresher from time to time!

Prayer is a relationship built over time. It requires our attention and persistence. Each of us is called to interact with God in personal, meaningful ways. Of course, each person is unique; thus, each individual’s prayer is distinctive. Because the use and study of scripture is often a springboard to prayer, I believe learning more about God’s Word in scripture is crucial. There are countless ways to increase our knowledge of scripture. One way is through reading and reflecting on the works of authors who have spent their lives researching biblical texts. I offer the following suggestions for those who are interested.

Jesus by Marcus Borg
The Power of Parable by John Dominic Crossan
Paul and Jesus by James Tabor
Jesus by James Martin
Paul: The Mind of the Apostle by A. N. Wilson

There are many more texts available. Get started. It will make a difference. Happy reading! Sr. Patricia Geary

We’d love to hear from others who have found a particular style of prayer helpful in growing their relationship with God. Please send your suggestions for prayer to Maryellen Glackin to include in future NewsNotes.

Archives Receives a Gift

We recently were gifted a copy of a new book about the City of Ogdensburg, NY. The book was a gift from Sister Mary Christine Taylor, SSJ, blood sister to our Sister Rose Ann Taylor, GNSH. Addressed in this scholarly tome is the long and significant history of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart in the “burg.” The copy was sent to us for our archives and will be a nice addition to our collection.
GNSHappenings...

Philadelphia Associates
The GNSH Associates held their monthly meeting at Holy Redeemer Lafayette on Saturday January 13. After prayer and sharing on a contemporary topic related to the charism of St. Marguerite, they moved to planning upcoming activities. Monthly, Associates serve at St. John Hospice and do other works of charity. They spent some time discussing different ways to support local charities, and charities that are already supported in some way by the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart such as Asylee Women Enterprise (AWE) and SOIL (Sustainable, Organic Integrated Livelihoods).

During the meeting they were also presented with a new brochure designed as an invitation to others who may also be interested in becoming Associates of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. To learn more click here.

Project Compassion
At the employee Mission Day Retreat a suggestion was made to participate in acts of service and ministry as a group throughout the year. Eileen Dickerson came up with an initial project, to collect diapers for families in need in the local area. We’ll be donating packages of diapers to local agencies who serve families with young children. We’ve also invited our neighbors here at the offices to partner with us. The collection will conclude on February 14, which this year is both St. Valentine’s Day and also Ash Wednesday, to draw the connection between real love, and it’s counterpoint, compassion. Thanks to Eileen for this great suggestion.

Read more about Project Compassion on the next page.

North Carolina, Adieu!
Sister Eileen Spanier is making the move from North Carolina to the Philadelphia area at the beginning of February. It is a bittersweet goodbye because she has thoroughly enjoyed her time with the students and made many good friends in campus ministry. Sister Eileen states, “I am happy to be moving closer to my community and my family and anxious to see what God has planned for the next chapter of my life.”

Sister has been feted throughout the various campuses and there are many pictures on Facebook—but just one here! It reads, “Fine. Go! BWWMUVM (But We Will Miss U Very Much!) Thank you for spreading the Charism of St. Marguerite to so many students over the years. North Carolina is a better place because of you!

Holy Redeemer Lafayette
The Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart received an unexpected recognition at a recent Life Celebration for Laura Montalbano who died in December. Mention was made in the biography her family provided, “She was especially invigorated as the many nuns began to move into HR Lafayette (sic) and she called many of them friends.”

We perceive that our Sisters have had an impact at their new residence, yet it was still surprising to know a family member noticed.

Rest in Peace, Laura. Your Nun friends miss you!

Full Biography

MONTHLY QUOTE

Caring for the human family and community is not only central to human life, it is the economic and social foundation of all economies. Across the world, it is a cultural given that women are the primary care-givers, yet the value and moral imperatives of care work are undervalued, unrecorded and invisible in most societies.

The Care Economy. Center of Concern

Photo by Joshua Newton on Unsplash
“The generations need each other. Young people seek heroes to look up to and aspire toward. Older folk need the fresh eye, courage, and idealism of newcomers at the table of decision-making. When we work together across generations, we take our surest steps into a future of hope. Elders like Simeon and Anna still haunt sacred places, waiting on God to fulfill old promises. Young families continue to present themselves, bearing their joys and uncertainties. This happy intersection is both consolation and challenge. Let’s find out together what it means to be church!”

Take Five for Faith

This quote summed up much of what has been done with the Ambassador Program and also with other initiatives being put forth that overlap with Communications, Vocation Ministry, our Lay Associates and Social Media. Most recently, a request came from Sr. Eileen Spanier for Sisters to write to students who will go on the “Give Your Heart Away Weekend” from the schools in North Carolina. Those letters are beginning to come in, but we are still in need of more writers. (Email Maryellen if you are willing to write to the students).

A meeting of the Communications core committee (Sr. Mary Elizabeth Looby, Eileen Dickerson and Maryellen Glackin) led to a small card being designed for use in a variety of settings, such as being handed to students at Grey Nun Academy by their teacher, or being handed to any of the numerous ‘helpers’ our Sisters encounter in their daily lives, whether at HR Lafayette, the Plaza, or wherever YOU are!

We are promoting this idea as Project Compassion (place the emphasis where you wish: PROject Compassion or PROJECT Compassion). There is so much negativity in our world, we thought it a good idea to emphasize the positive actions of others.

We have recently created a new Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart Associate brochure. Available copies were given to Sisters during a recent meeting at Holy Redeemer Lafayette, to the Associates and also delivered to Sacred Heart Center in Buffalo. Read more here

All of these efforts are focused on the Charism of St. Marguerite and the way that the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart carry it out and share it with others.

Sharing Marguerite’s Charism is a way of bridging any divide between generations. As in Marguerite’s time, there is currently no shortage of souls needing comfort and no shortage of issues needing our compassion.

(Purple links take you to more information about each of these projects)

Thank You Notes

Please accept my gratitude for the many Mass cards, emails and calls to me at the time of my sister Kathleen’s death.

The many Grey Nuns who attended her funeral was a comforting presence to me and to Kathleen’s husband, sons and grandchildren. Your prayers especially are such a support.

Sister Nora Friel and the Gibbons family

My family and I thank you for your cards, care and concern at the time of my brother-in-law’s death. I am so grateful to each of you for your words of comfort and many prayers during this difficult time.

Sister Dawn Gear and the family of Stephen Iwaniuk
February Reflection

God of vision,
we long to see your face
and are afraid to see it;
we long to break
the grip of suffering,
and we cannot cast it out.
Uncover our faces
and expose us to your glory,
that we may comprehend the pain
in their suffering and insight,
and the world may be transfigured in you.
Amen

Janet Morley, England

Scheduled Executions for February 2018

1: John Battaglia, TX
13: Raymond Tibbetts, OH
22: Doyle Lee Hamm, AL
22: Eric Branch, FL
22: Thomas Whitaker, TX

Death Penalty Information
National Catholic Pledge to End the Death Penalty
“All Christians and people of good will are thus called today to
fight not only for the abolition of the death penalty, whether legal
or illegal, and in all its forms, but also in order to improve prison
conditions, with respect for the human dignity of the people
deprived of their freedom” - Pope Francis #Pledge4Mercy

Catholic Mobilizing Network wants YOU to take action and ask
for clemency for those scheduled to die by the death penalty.
They have recently updated their website with more
opportunities for advocacy. Be sure to take a look!
Current Death Penalty information is also available HERE

Pray for an end to the death penalty,
for those scheduled for execution,
for the victims of these crimes and
all whose lives have been impacted by violence.

February
2 World Day for Consecrated Life
7,8,9 Leadership Meetings
9-11 Give Your Heart Away Weekend
14 Ash Wednesday

Future Dates
March
3 Congregational Day in Philadelphia
8-14 National Catholic Sisters Week
10 Congregational Day in Buffalo
20,21,22 Leadership Meetings

April
1 Easter Sunday
8-13 GNSH Chapter 2018
20 Leadership Meeting
28 GNSH Jubilee 2018