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*Inspired and
Invited*

(See page 2.)

A Trunk Full of Water

Companionship that we receive from pets can far outsize the room they take up on the couch or in a tabletop habitat. Then again, Pope Leo X found the “greatest amusement” in the company of Hanno, his beloved pet elephant. The sixteenth-century Pontiff allowed the public to visit Hanno in a habitat between Saint Peter’s Basilica and the Apostolic Palace. When it came time to bid eternal farewell to his pet, the Pope had Hanno buried in the Belvedere Courtyard. Twentieth-century workers thought they had unearthed a dinosaur when excavating to upgrade Vatican heating and ventilation systems. They discovered the storied bones of the Pope’s pet pachyderm.



Fr. Mark Payne
Chaplain

Lent has the twofold purpose of renewal in the Baptismal promises and strengthening in devotion. Both lead to the joyful celebration of Easter. During the season of Lent, we recall that the Holy Spirit dwells within us. We choose how much room to offer. Looking at our calendars, we may see only a small space each Sunday dedicated to Him. In Lent, we seek to do some rearranging so that we can devote a Hanno-sized room to the Lord for six weeks before Easter and beyond.

Elephants use their trunks to syphon water and then shower with it. Closely tied to the Sacrament of Baptism, Lent serves as a reminder of the sprinkling of holy water and our cleansing from Original sin. As Baptized children of God, our heavenly Father invites us to take in the gift of His love and then let it refresh us.

Elephants also give themselves mud baths by stirring up silt or spraying themselves with dirt after a water bath. Mud protects their skin from sunburn and parasites. The Lord Jesus stirred things up and muddied the waters of religious belief, yet we have come to understand that obedience to His ways and His Word protects us from sin’s sting that goes beyond skin deep.

Pope Leo X received Hanno from the King of Portugal. As an offering to our Savior and King, your Lenten gift to Heart of the Nation will help to provide Sunday Mass, Catholic publications, and the showering of His protective love.

“I watch to keep me positive and happy during these crazy times.”

~Barb



“Thanks for the beautiful Mass. The musicians sounded like angels singing. What inspiration during a time of need and healing.”

~Nancy



“We are so pleased that we can help out each month in our little way to ensure the continued broadcasting of Mass. Not able to attend Mass in person, we were so happy to find your services.”

~Tonette & Jim

The Lord Makes House Calls

Jesus made house calls. Arriving at the home of Peter and Andrew, for instance, the Lord cured Peter’s mother-in-law of a fever. In the days leading up to Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17), readings from the Gospel of Mark depict Jesus also healing people who came right to Him.

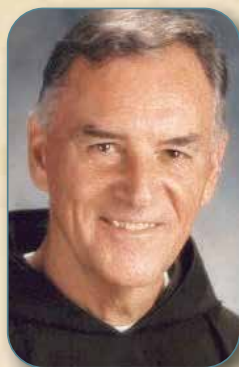
With the introduction of motor cars, physicians became some of the first drivers. When someone sent for the doctor to make a house call, a car facilitated leaving right away, without having to saddle or hitch up a horse. Cars had more horsepower, too, as the doctors hurried to help.

Jesus traveled a lot on foot. On the first Sunday of February, Scripture takes us to Capernaum, where the Lord had amazed people in the synagogue by teaching with authority and driving an unclean spirit out of a man. Later, after curing Peter’s mother-in-law, the Lord healed many who had gathered outside the house.

Leaving Capernaum, the Lord encountered a leper, obligated because of his disease to warn people away. Instead, the leper approached Jesus and said,

“If you wish, you can make me clean.” Jesus cured him.

How often in prayer do we drive home what



**Fr. Tony Scannell
Chaplain**

we desire, not stopping to consider what God wishes for us? Lent invites us to put God in the driver’s seat, letting Him steer us in a heavenward direction.

On the road in the district of Tyre, Jesus met a Gentile woman who begged Him to cure her daughter. Israelites, as God’s chosen people, wanted exclusive claim to His favor, and Jesus said out loud what

they believed when He compared helping her to throwing food meant for children to the dogs. The woman said that dogs get scraps fallen from the table. In faith, she took Jesus’ word for it as He assured her of the daughter’s healing.

In medical practice, promptness can make a difference. Duryea Motor Wagon Company, the first manufacturer of gasoline-powered cars in the United States, provided the know-how for a model called the Physician’s Wagon.

The local doctor in Appleton, Wisconsin, drove an 1898 Duryea, the first car in town. Not completely faithful of its reliability, he strapped a bicycle on back. Lent’s penitential journey to Easter is like that. We have doubts but prepare on Ash Wednesday for the road ahead.



Inspired and Invited

Inspired by your need for the TV/online Mass or your desire to answer the Lord’s invitation to share your faith, please donate during the Inspired and Invited fund drive.

“On Ash Wednesday, a reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians encourages working together as ‘ambassadors for Christ,’” explained Fr. Mark Payne, chaplain for Heart of the Nation. “Your Lenten offering in any amount will become a very meaningful way to participate in the sacrifice, the compassion, and the love of the Lord given so that many would come to believe.”

Prayer in Sickness



Blessed Virgin Mary,

In your gentle holiness,
Please join me in this prayer
For hope in the Lord Jesus,
Who loves beyond compare.

In your closeness to the Lord,
Please ask that He bless me
With grace in time of sickness,
Pain, or infirmity.

In your maternal care,
May the comfort that I find
Help me in faith to seek Him
With heart and soul and mind.

In your loving presence,
May the healing meant to be
Or suffering endured become
Blessed for eternity. Amen.

Valentine Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Love shared, given
and received
Enfolds my most joyous
memories.

For love's inscription
on my heart,
I give You thanks and glory.

For love shown in many ways
And its gift beyond what words
can say,
For each moment filled
with love,
I come to You in grateful praise.

Greater love there cannot be
Than what Jesus
showed readily.
In hope, I offer You this prayer
For life in love eternally. Amen.

Lenten Questions and Answers

When does Lent begin and end? Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17, 2021) and concludes before Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday (April 3, 2021). Liturgically, though, Lent ends before the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday (April 1).

What do Lenten fasting and abstinence require? The obligation to fast on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17) and Good Friday (April 2) allows three meals, but two small meals together should be less than the full one. Abstinence on all Fridays of Lent prohibits eating meat or poultry. No one should jeopardize health by fasting.

Should Catholics give up something during Lent? Beyond the required fasting and abstinence, described above, the Church encourages additional penitential practices. Prayer, further fasting (not just from food), and almsgiving develop spiritual discipline. Some Catholics omit penitential practices on Sundays.

Year of Saint Joseph

Pope Francis has proclaimed a Year of Saint Joseph. In an Apostolic Letter, the Holy Father described him as loving and beloved by Jesus and Mary, obedient to God, hard-working, and "creatively courageous" in addressing events in his life. When Mary became pregnant, Joseph protected her. Protective, yet not possessive, Joseph led his family to Egypt to save Jesus from Herod but also gave his Son the freedom needed to grow up. Giving of himself, Joseph made sacrifices with the "joy of love."



Scripture does not quote Joseph, and Pope Francis compared his role in salvation history to that of people in the shadows during the historic pandemic of our age. Parents, grandparents, and teachers have shown children how to adjust and prayerfully look forward. From doctors and nurses to storekeepers and cleaners, workers have sacrificed for others.

When Pope Pius IX named Joseph as patron of the Church in 1870, rationalism and materialism had gained footholds. Troops occupied Rome. Today's Church still faces challenges of worldly ideals and war.

Through Dec. 8, 2021, the anniversary of Pius IX's declaration, our Year of Saint Joseph provides for special indulgences. Ask God for the indulgence. Granted by God through the Church to take away all punishment here or in purgatory for past sins, the plenary indulgences require complete detachment from all sin. If unable to participate in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist, resolve to do so as soon as possible; also, recite an act of piety in honor of Saint Joseph (e.g., *To You, O Blessed Joseph*) while offering your pain and hardships to God. Pray for the Pope's intentions (e.g., an *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*). Lastly, participate in the Year of Saint Joseph in one of eight ways. Meditating on the Lord's Prayer for 30 minutes, asking Joseph to intercede for those seeking jobs to find dignifying work, or entrusting your daily activity to Saint Joseph's protection provide three practicable ways for the homebound.

With gratitude, Heart of the Nation welcomes new members to the Circle of the Heart monthly giving club. As a member, you will be included in prayers placed before the altar for every Sunday TV Mass. To join, please mark the box on your donation reply card, and indicate the amount of your pledge. *Thank you!*

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