



SO NOTED

Week of February 8, 2016

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Sunday, p.m.

Send news to:
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Get Lent

Protestants do the sober season.

By **Andrew Santella**

Since Brent does not have an article for this issue, I offer this one, which appeared on slate.com in 2006. It's long but well-written and informative. —The Editor

If you grew up, as I did, thinking of Lent as the Time of the Frozen Fish Sticks, you can't help but be surprised by the expanding enthusiasm for the pre-Easter season of penitence and fasting. Lent, it seems, isn't just for Catholics

anymore. Over the last few years, more Protestant churches have begun daubing ashes on the foreheads of the faithful on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent in Western Christianity [Feb. 10 this year].

Fasting, long familiar to Catholics as a Lenten fact of life, is increasingly popular with evangelical Christians striving for spiritual awakening. A few mainline Protestant churches even conduct foot-washing services on **Maundy Thursday**—the traditional commemoration of Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples—that takes place on the Thursday before Easter. Which seems like a sign that Protestants may be starting to beat Catholics at their own game.

The showy practices typical of Lent—fasting and vigils, ashes and incense—once helped define the split of the Reformation. When they broke away in the 16th and 17th centuries, most Protestant churches left behind anything that smacked of Catholic practice. (Though a few "high-church" denominations—Episcopalians, for example—remained partial to ashes and other staples of Catholic ritual.)

So, what's at work when Protestants and Catholics find common cause in fasting and foot-washing? While no one's ready to declare an end to 500 years of ecumenical



Lent

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NEWSY NOTES & SHAMELESS PROMOTIONS



THIS WEEK . . .

Tomorrow, Wednesday, Feb. 10, is Ash Wednesday. The choir will NOT be singing at the service, which begins at 6:15 p.m. in the Chapel. Wednesday services will continue until Easter.

Regular choir rehearsal will be held Wednesday (tomorrow) at 7:20 p.m.

Brent thanks all of you who attended the Saturday Retreat at Sagewood. Thanks to **Ruth and Warner Davidson** for a warm welcome and for making the arrangements at “their place.”

The choir practiced two original composition by our very own members—tenors **Michael Hegeman and Steve Crosby**. These pieces will receive their Arizona debut by our choir during the regular worship service on **Sunday, April 3**.

ODDS & ENDS . . .

Prayers, please:

- Marilyn reports that **Ruth Fowlis** is home after 21 days in the hospital and should recover fully from a brain virus. However, the recovery will be slow and Ruth and Al will not be returning to Scottsdale this spring. Cards may be sent to their Vancouver address which is posted on the choir bulletin board by the calendar.
- Soprano **Sonja Hall** is grateful that her husband’s eye problem suddenly resolved itself, though the long-term outcome is unknown at this time.
- Please pray for alto **Diane Oeste’s son-in-law** who suffers from depression.
- Bass/baritone soloist **Mark Leal** is happy to report that he is the new choir director at Superstition Springs Elementary School. Congrats, Mark!
- Prayers, please for **soprano Mary LaValley** who is most likely home from the hospital at this writing. She was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and pulmonary edema following pneumonia.

Recital Coming Up

Tenor soloist **Andrew Peck** is performing his first DMA (Doctorate in Musical Arts) recital on Tuesday, March 22, 7:30 p.m. in the ASU Recital Hall. There is no ticket charge.



Coming to a Venue Near You

To order tickets (no discount, sorry):
Call AZ Musicfest at (480) 488-0806, or go online at <http://www.azmusicfest.org/festival/2016/fo4-2016/>

Several members of our choir are singing in the chorus for this unusual and magnificent piece. They



- 3 – Fred Dodge
- 11 – Marta Fiala
- 18 – Ted Crow
- 19 – Jim MacAllen
- 19—Jim McDowell
- 24—Jo Ann Dixon



- 1—Jim & Joanne McDowell
- 3—Nancy & Jim Schamadan
- 15—Kathryn & William Booze

Get Lent (Continued from page 1)

disagreement, the widening appeal of Lent reflects the interest among believers of all kinds in traditional ways of worship.

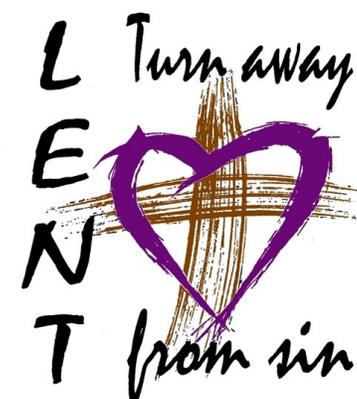
The fast and the ritual wearing of ashes predate Christianity—Job repents "in dust and ashes" in the Hebrew Bible. In the early church, it was a common to prepare for the celebration of Easter with a two- or three-day period of penitence and fasting. Originally, the fast was for new Christians preparing for baptism. But it became a way for all church faithful to commemorate Jesus' suffering and by the fourth century had expanded to 40 days.

In the Middle Ages, believers limited themselves during Lent to no meat and just one meal a day. Some fasts were more extreme. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, some church members abstained not just from meat, but from eggs, milk, cheese, and any "fruit covered by a hard shell." The ritual of putting ashes on the forehead grew out of a public confession ceremony for Christian sinners that preceded Easter. It became a prescribed practice throughout the church by the 11th century.

Though the rules for fasting and abstinence have relaxed over the centuries, Catholics still see Lent as a sacred time of self-denial, prayerful contemplation, and, yes, breaded cod. Adult Catholics are expected to fast (usually defined as eating one meal a day) on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and to abstain from eating meat on each Friday in Lent and on Ash Wednesday.

Catholic-school kids see their lunchroom hot dogs replaced with meat-free fare. Many Catholics still "give up something for Lent"—chocolate or alcohol, for example. But the emphasis is as likely to be on almsgiving or acts of charity, in hopes of making the world or one's self better rather than simply abstaining from pleasure.

The Swiss Protestant reformer Ulrich Zwingli mounted one of the first protests against Lenten traditions in 1522. Zwingli defended Zurich printers who insisted they needed their daily meat to have the strength to do their work properly. He complained that the rules of Lent had more to do with obeying Rome than with obeying the Gospel, which, after all, said nothing about whether or not to eat sausages in the weeks preceding Easter.



Martin Luther cautioned against fasting "with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work," arguing that Catholic teachings gave believers the false idea that fasting could cancel out sin and win points toward salvation. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin criticized Lent as a "superstitious observance."

Protestants remained conflicted about Lent into the 20th century. Ashes and fish sticks were the stuff of Catholic life, and Catholics were very much the other team. Evangelical Christians in particular skirted Lent because it smacked of high-church liturgical rule-making.

In 1960, *Christianity Today* ran an **editorial** describing Protestant believers torn



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Get Lent (Continued from page 3)

between the obligation to "do something" about observing the most sacred season in the Christian calendar" and the "sense of indignation that stirs within the Protestant breast, even to the pitch of revolt, at what the Church has done with Lent in the past." These Protestants could not separate Lenten traditions from their disdain for Rome and its elevation of "manifold regulations" over scripture.

So, how did Catholic Lenten traditions spread across the border? For one thing, the boundaries between traditions are not what they used to be. Crossing them is a steady traffic of believers and seekers. Want to meet someone who was raised Catholic? Try an evangelical megachurch, or the local United Church of Christ. About one-third of believers change churches at least once, according to commonly cited studies.

Inevitably, all this changing of churches ends up changing the churches, as people bring bits of their worship traditions with them. Catholic liturgy has **appropriated pop music and hand-holding** in evangelical style. So, maybe it's not that surprising that more Protestants are now dipping into the well of Catholic ritual and devotions.

In that sense, Lent may be part of a trend: Check out the **Ecumenical Miracle Rosary**, which recasts Catholic devotional beads for Protestant use by eliminating those troublesome Hail Marys.

Observing Lent is also part of a Protestant move in the last generation toward more classical forms of spiritual discipline.

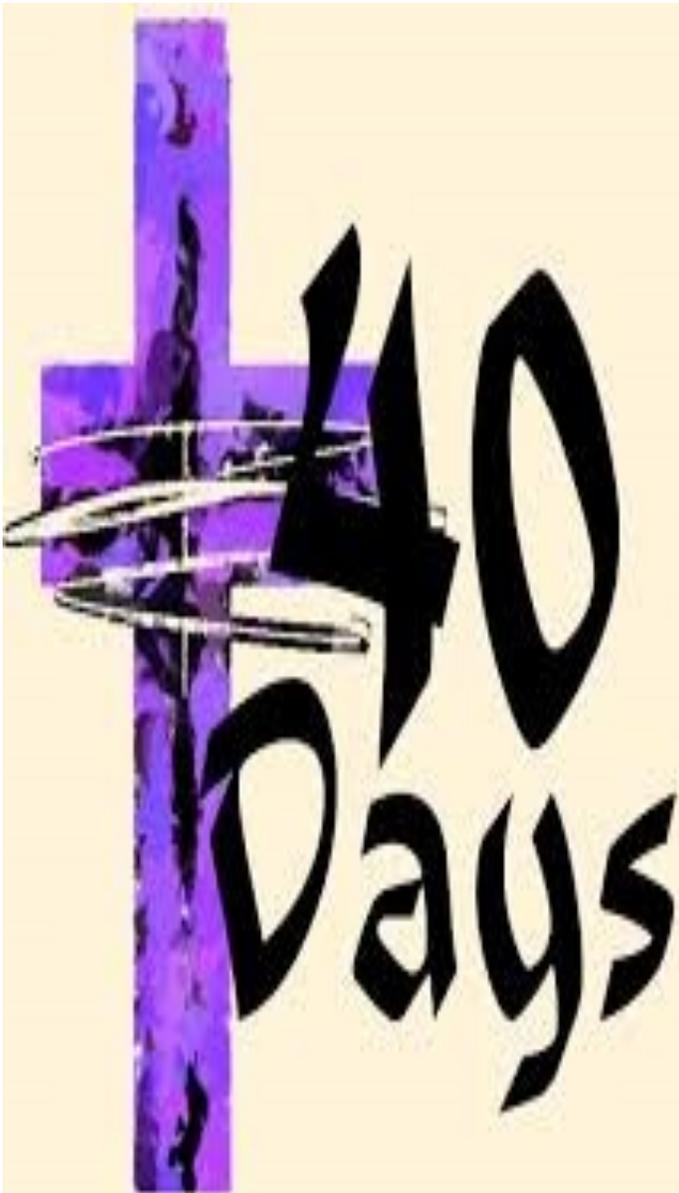
The hugely influential 1978 book *Celebration of Discipline*, by

Quaker theologian Richard J. Foster, encouraged churchgoers to rediscover fasting and meditation in "answer to a hollow world" and as a way to turn toward God.

Some questing Protestants started making like monks, practicing silence and solitude. All this was made more palatable by the improved relations between Catholics and Protestants that followed the Second Vatican Council reforms of the 1960s.

Perhaps it's the things that made Lent hard to take as a Catholic kid—the solemnity, the self-denial, the disappearance of hot dogs from the lunchroom—that account most for the season's broadening appeal. I was schooled to see Lent as a time apart, a respite from the daily pursuit of self-gratification. That apartness seems not unlike the "inward and spiritual reality" that Foster suggested could be found in the ancient disciplines.

Catholics have for so long thought of themselves as the defenders of ritual—the masters of incense, genuflection, and splendor—that it still seems strange to be sharing ash-wearing with Presbyterians and Methodists. But our shared affection of late for some of the old ways of worship represents a small victory for mystery, ritual, and awe. Now if we could just come to ecumenical agreement about the evils of frozen fish sticks.



Phoenix Boys Choir presents Vision of Peace

Friday, March 4, 2016
7:30 p.m.

Join the world-renown Phoenix Boys Choir in this moving concert expressing mankind's universal desire for peace on earth. With stunning beauty, the voices of the choir

The program features Haydn's majestic *Timpani Mass*, written in tribute to his war ravaged homeland of Austria; excerpts from *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, a musical tribute to the children lost in World War II; and *Verleih uns Frieden* (Grant Us Peace) by Heinrich Schütz, based on Martin Luther's poignant text: "In these our days so perilous, Lord, peace in mercy send us".



Premium Seating: \$28
General Admission: \$23
Student: Free

TICKETS: <https://www.wiztix.com/dnboxoffice/inet/eventview.aspx?CID=27>

DEVOTIONS SCHEDULE 2016

FEBRUARY

- 10 - Wendy Neideck
- 17 - Michael Hegeman
- 24 - Jo Ann Dixon

MARCH

- 2 - Carl Svedeen
- 9 - Fred Dodge
- 16 - Warner Davidson
- 23 - Lynda Elliott
- 30 - Ron Tellefson

APRIL

- 6 - Marti Nagel
- 13 - Bruce Porter
- 20 - Sonja Hall
- 27 - Dick Phelps

MAY

- 4 - Meredith Downing
- 11 - Jim Stull

2015-16 Concerts

Friday, March 4, 7:30 PM
**Phoenix Boys Choir
presents Vision of Peace**

Friday, March 18, 7:30 PM
**December '63:
The Music of Frankie Valli
and the Four Seasons**

Friday, April 8, 7:30 PM
Ocotillo Winds

Friday, April 15, 7:30 PM
Organized Rhythm