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Issue 1125

Pope Francis on observing Lent



“Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in his providence offers us each year the season of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion.”

Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life.”

“Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal.”

“Almsgiving sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbors as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us! How I would like us, as Christians, to follow the example of the apostles and see in the sharing of our possessions a tangible witness of the communion that is ours in the church! For this reason, I echo Saint Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians to take up a collection for the community of Jerusalem as something from which they themselves would benefit (cf. 2 Cor 8:10). This is all the more fitting during the Lenten season, when many groups take up collections to assist churches and peoples in need. Yet I would also hope that, even in our daily encounters with those who beg for our assistance, we would see such requests as coming from God himself. When we give alms, we share in God’s providential care for each of his children. If through me God helps someone today, will he not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God.” (Excerpted from Pope Francis’ message for Lent 2018)



Justice and peace director works for transformation



"It is difficult to create a 'day in the life,' because our work is directly impacted by what is happening in the world," said Marcia Lee, director of the Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph. "Our work happens at the intersection of our Franciscan spirituality with reading and responding to the signs of our times."

Sharing information is also an important part of Lee's work for the Capuchins. When she spoke with NCR in early January, Lee's current projects included helping the friars work out the details of doing energy audits on all their buildings, learning from and taking action with immigrant communities, and reducing meat consumption.

At others times, she makes sure the friars know what others in their province are doing and leads days of recollection, training for postulants or various workshops for the friars or their ministries.

While she sometimes has difficulty getting friars involved in a particular project, Lee said the friars are "not all of the same mind, but they are all of the same spirit." She added that sometimes the friars "don't realize what they're doing is justice and peace work." For those that don't already connect service and justice, such as feeding the hungry while addressing the root causes of hunger, "making the connections is just really powerful, and then the work that they do really transforms." (*Excerpted from National Catholic Reporter, 2/13/18*)

We saw you at celebrations this month!



Last week Chicago marked the start of the *Year of the Dog*, the latest turn in the 12-year lunar zodiac cycle. And Milwaukee celebrated Candlemas Day while Mt. Calvary observed Mardi Gras. It was a week of community celebrations!

Recommended reading

Review by Joseph Babcock



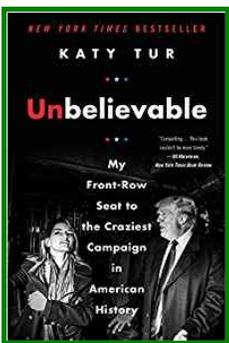
Have you ever walked by that one life-sized bronze statue at the Solanus Center and thought, “Who the heck is that guy?” Servant of God Takashi Nagai was a radiologist in Nagasaki, Japan when he converted to the Catholic faith from atheism. He led a life of heroic virtue, and he was marvelously successful in his scientific research as well as in his civic and church engagement. Then the atomic bomb dropped: his wife was killed, his home was destroyed, and his entire life was upended. This began a radically new phase of his life. He suffered greatly, bed-ridden in a little hut next to the site of the destroyed Urukami Cathedral. During this stage of his life, he wrote many books and received countless visitors. His extraordinary faith was a wellspring which gave hope to the entire nation of Japan following World War II. He wrote adamantly in support of nuclear disarmament as well as in promotion of Catholic doctrine.

The biography, *A Song for Nagasaki*, by Marianist missionary Paul Glynn is extraordinarily well-written. In my experience, Catholic biographies about holy people can vary greatly in literary quality. However, this book was astoundingly poetic, engaging, and thoughtful. The foreword is written by Shusaku Endo, author of the book *Silence* which was made into an American major motion picture.



Takashi Nagai is an outstanding model of virtue, and the spiritual parallels between him and Solanus Casey are compelling. Excellent Lenten reading!
Joseph Babcock is a friar in post-novitiate formation.

Review by Richard Hart



Unbelievable by Katy Tur is an appropriate title for her book which graphically depicts how she covered Donald Trump’s campaign for five-hundred and ten days. She vividly describes what challenges a reporter for NBC News endures traveling to forty-one different cities and nineteen states, faceless airports, cramped coach seats, peanuts, a job which stretched her mind and body to its limits, especially after receiving 21,376 e-mails, plus voice mails and text messages. Tur had a front row seat to what she called the craziest campaign in American history. Trump called her a third-rate reporter and a liar, even though she accurately reported him leaving the stage abruptly in Raleigh, Carolina, and he wanted an apology which she never did despite death threats from others. She lived every lie, every controversy as Trump endeavored to intimidate, insult and thrash her, but she fearlessly tried not to show this on camera. All the polls, national, state, internal, pointed to Clinton as the winner, but Katy believed Trump would win. She could have gone to Washington D.C. because she was the lead reporter on a winning campaign, but decided to go to New York for NBC.

Richard Hart ministers as a member of the province’s preaching team.

Let the visitation begin

On Feb. 7th general councilor Mark Schenk, visited Casa San José in Tucson AZ. Bob Kose, Franklin Eichhorst, Wally Balduck and John Francis Samsa welcomed Mark and enjoyed the short visit with him and appreciated his sharing of the goals of the forthcoming general chapter in Rome. Mark left for the freezing cold weather of Montana to continue his visitation with the fraternities there.





Maryann Kinzer, sister of Joe Wolf, is reportedly near death.

Vincent Cabras, father of Fred Cabras, recently underwent surgery. Fred's family is grateful for the prayers.

Dwyn Hirt, mother of David Hirt, fell recently and sustained broken ribs and clavicle.

Former friar Justinian Liebl died recently in Managua.

Albert Sandor's surgery was successful, and he is grateful for the prayers.

Thank to all for your prayers and kind words that were sent to me during my time of sadness and grief. I will continue to read them to help me through the days ahead. Peace be with all of you. ~John Raniszewski

Kenan Siegel was hospitalized recently for pneumonia and influenza.

FEBRUARIE



22 SLS Ministry Council

25 **Martin Pable (B)**

MARCH



3 Preaching/Evang Commission Video Conf

5 **Niles Kauffman (B)**
Joe Martinez (B)

6-10 NAPCC, San Antonio TX



What to Give Up for Lent? Smoking? Cursing? How About Plastic?

For Lent, many Christians give up indulgences like tobacco, alcohol or sweets, or transgressions like lying and swearing. And for Anglicans, don't forget synthetic fabrics, wet wipes, and those little boxes that hold dental floss.

The Church of England has asked people to add a new culprit to the list of ills they forsake for the six weeks of penance that begin on Ash Wednesday: plastics. Specifically, the church wants people to avoid the plastic consumer products and packaging that have become a major environmental problem, polluting oceans and rivers, fouling beaches, killing wildlife and clogging landfills.

The Church of England has created a [calendar](#) for a plastics-free Lent, each day bearing either an environmentally-themed Bible verse or a suggestion on how to avoid buying plastics.

Along with some of the easier-to-follow suggestions, like buying clothes made of natural fibers or taking reusable bags to the grocery store, are others that might require more effort, like finding dental floss that does not come in a plastic box, or using "a bamboo toothbrush or a toothbrush with recyclable heads."

A large part of the world's plastic waste — estimates range from five million to 13 million tons per year — ends up in the oceans. Circulating currents have created immense rotating patches of waste, mostly plastic, in subtropical regions.

Wave action and sunlight break floating plastics down in smaller pieces, but some of them are very slow to degrade chemically, and are toxic. Animals eat bits of plastic, with ill effects on them — and further up the food chain, all the way to humans — that are only beginning to be understood.