

A person stands on a beach at sunset, their arms outstretched in a gesture of freedom or surrender. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting in the calm water. The person's silhouette is reflected in the water below. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, red, and blue.

**The
Sneak Peek!**

Fasting Towards Freedom

Reflections for Lent 2020

By Sr. Rose Marie Tresp, RSM & Michael Vazquez

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About the Authors



Sister Rose Marie Tresp, is passionate about social justice believing that individuals and the country must practice and embody Matthew 25. She is a Sister of Mercy, serving since 2008 as the Mercy Director of Justice for the South Central province. Sister Rose Marie is a member of the Pax Christi USA National Council, serves on the Social Responsibility Committee of Mercy Investment Services, is a member of the Charlotte Diocese Global Solidarity Committee, is a Catholic Climate Ambassador for the Catholic Climate Covenant, and served as a member of the Mercy Anti-Racism Transformation Team. She previously worked as a medical ethicist, a director of parish religious education, and in community leadership for her congregation. In addition, she has served on hospital, school, and community boards of trustees. She has traveled to Mexico, Belize, Honduras, Panama, and El Salvador, to learn from the people in these countries. Her hobbies are vegetable gardening and reading science fiction novels. *Each of Sr. Rose Marie's reflections will be notated with (R.T.) to signify her authorship.*



Michael Vazquez is the Religion and Faith Director at the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization, and the founder of Brave Commons, a faith-based advocacy organization working to support LGBTQ students facing discrimination at Christian Colleges and Universities. Michael is finishing his Masters in Theological Studies at Duke University with an emphasis in homiletics and public theology. When not working towards our collective liberation, Michael enjoys afternoon naps, good wine, and even better company. *Each of Michael's reflections will be notated with (M.V.) to signify his authorship.*

Ash Wednesday

February 26, 2020

Joel 2:12-18; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

“Yet even now, declares God, return to Me with all your heart.” Joel 2:12

As we enter into the Lenten 2020 season, a time of uncertainty in our world and country, we ask ourselves, what does it mean to be a disciple, a follower of the Gospel and person of Jesus Christ? What does it mean to receive the ashes that symbolize a desire to return ever more deeply to God with all my heart? When I taught grade school religion, the children told me that it was easier to give up such things as chocolate than to make a positive choice to do cheerfully such actions as their assigned chores. So our Lenten fasting is not so much “fasting from” as “fasting toward” that deepening that will allow us to be ambassadors for Christ, to be reconciled with God, and to receive the grace of God. To live the Gospel authentically is to increasingly live with no division between word and action.

What practices this Lenten season will assist me to look deeper, to return to God in my heart, to live without division between word and action? (R.T.)

Saturday, March 21

Hosea 6:1-6; Luke 18:9-14

“After two days God will revive us; on the third day God will raise us up, that we may live before God.” Hosea 6:2

Lent is a season that drives us towards liberation and healing. Jesus' confrontation with Satan in the wilderness is a confrontation with humanity's shadow. It is a drawing of hidden things into the light. Both the Pharisee and the tax collector come face to face with their shadow in light of the temple. Both genuinely are seeking God in their prayers and in the process are confronted with that which is not yet liberated within themselves. The Pharisee, while exceedingly righteous, is faced with his prejudice against the tax collector – known to have betrayed their people for a rich payout from the Romans. The tax collector, on the other hand, is faced with the shame of his betrayal. One must confront their imbedded

superiority complex. The other their deep shame. Both are given the same promise that we are offered this Lenten season: to be revived and lifted up into the presence of our Beloved.

What in you, longs to be free? (M.V.)

Hope you enjoyed the sneak peek of the 2020 Lent booklet. Please order before Jan. 6 to get the lowest price at paxchristiusa.3dcartstores.com.