

The Lion

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Guarric, Abbat of Igniac.

THE HAPPINESS OF SIMEON WHEN OUR LORD WAS PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE.

[This is from the beginning of the sixth sermon on Candlemas-day. Bib. Max. Ttri- p. 197.] Translated by Dr. John Mason Neale.

AND when the days of her purification were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem. Oh how happy is he of whom it may be said, *the days of his purification are accomplished*; so that nothing now further remains but that they bear him to the heavenly Jerusalem, and set him before the Lord. And such an one was that old man, our Simeon; as much to be desired, as full of desires. The days of his purification, as I imagine, had long since been accomplished; to-day those of his expectation also were fulfilled. So that now, according to the Word of the LORD, nothing else remained for him, after he had seen the LORD'S CHRIST, — CHRIST, the Peace of God and of men, — but that he should be let to *depart in peace*, and should *lay him down in peace and take his rest*; that is, that they should bear him into the Jerusalem of eternal peace, and set him where he might contemplate *that peace which passeth all understanding*. O Simeon, man of desires, thy desire is filled with good things! Blessed old man! *thy youth is renewed, like the eagles'* Thou hast now *gone unto that altar of God*, heavenly, eternal; to the God *Who giveth joy to thy youth* by the eternal vision of Himself, as He had given joy to thy old age by the vision, as to-day, of CHRIST. At that invisible altar thou art now thyself presented to the

FATHER, to Whom, at this visible altar,¹ thou didst today present the SON. The SON Himself, Whom thou didst this day carry in thine arms, thou dost there now enfold with an eternal and indissoluble embrace. The longing of the happy old man is therefore *filled with good things*, whose whole expectation and desire was the *Expectation of the Gentiles*, and their *Desire*.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF COMPLETE PURIFICATION.

AND we, then, if the days of our purification have been rightly accomplished, shall be carried to the heavenly Jerusalem by the ministry of angels; that there, standing before the Presence of GOD, we may be His accepted and immaculate oblation. Then at length we shall be purified alto-

gether; as from sin, so also from the punishment of sin. Then, that which is the consummation will also be the reward of our purification; when the heavenly fire shall have made us altogether a burnt-offering to the LORD. Yet not even here does the devotion of saints cease to emulate this inexplicable manner of a most blessed purification; that is, as much as the corruption of their bodies, and the solicitude of their earthly habitation will permit. While going up in their spirit to that Jerusalem, the true place of prayer, they then offer, as it were, in the sight of the Lord, a turtle dove and pigeon for themselves and of themselves; their heart and their flesh rejoicing in the living God, because *the dove hath found her an house, and the turtle a nest where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O Lord of Hosts*. And I think, however, that the merit is no less, and the purification perhaps greater, if that which it is given to some few,

S. Antony of Padua THE SIX SAYINGS OF S. MARY

Note that the blessed Mary, as may be collected from the Gospels of Luke and John, only uttered six sentences which are recorded. The first was: *How shall this be?* The second: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*. The third: *My soul doth magnify the Lord*. The fourth: *Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us?* The fifth: *They have no wine*. The sixth, when she said to the servants, *Whatever He saith unto you, do it*. These are, as it were, - the six steps in the ivory throne of Solomon: the six leaves in Lebanon: the six branches in the candlestick. In her first saying we note her firm determination of inviolable chastity. In the second, an illustrious example of obedience and humility. In the third, her exultation for the benefit conferred on her. In the fourth, her solicitude for her Son. In the fifth, her compassion. In the sixth, her certainty of the power of her Son.

and but seldom, to experience as it were through a glass, and in a riddle,— that is, to those presented in Jerusalem to the Lord,—is done by us through faith again and again, perpetually. Setting the Lord always before us, and considering with most watchful faith, and unrelaxed fear, that His Eyes and His judgments are ever upon us. Let this faith, brethren, be in you, and ye will be among the few; let this fear be in you, and ye will purge yourselves as few do from negligence, because such a fear neglects nothing. §

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

1 January 2009

by His Holiness, Pope Benedict of Rome
BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

*These paragraphs are excerpted from a much longer essay
which is available on the www.vatican.va website.*

ONCE again, as the new year begins, I want to extend good wishes for peace to people everywhere. With this Message I would like to propose a reflection on the theme: Fighting Poverty to Build Peace. Back in 1993, my venerable Predecessor Pope John Paul II, in his Message for the World Day of Peace that year, drew attention to the negative repercussions for peace when entire populations live in poverty. Poverty is often a contributory factor or a compounding element in conflicts, including armed ones. In turn, these conflicts fuel further tragic situations of poverty. “Our world”, he wrote, “shows increasing evidence of another grave threat to peace: many individuals and indeed whole peoples are living today in conditions of extreme poverty. The gap between rich and poor has become more marked, even in the most economically developed nations. This is a problem which the conscience of humanity cannot ignore, since the conditions in which a great number of people are living are an insult to their innate dignity and as a result are a threat to the authentic and harmonious progress of the world community.”

In this context, fighting poverty requires attentive consideration of the complex phenomenon of globalization. This is important from a methodological standpoint, because it suggests drawing upon the fruits of economic and sociological research into the many different aspects of poverty. Yet the reference to globalization should also alert us to the spiritual and moral implications of the question, urging us, in our dealings with the poor, to set out from the clear recognition that we all share in a single divine plan: we are called to form one family in which all – individuals, peoples and nations – model their behaviour according to the principles of fraternity and responsibility.

One of the most important ways of building peace is through a form of globalization directed towards the interests of the whole human family. In order to govern globalization, however, there needs to be a strong sense of global solidarity [9] between rich and poor countries, as well as within individual countries, including affluent ones. A “common code of ethics” is also needed, consisting of norms based not upon mere consensus, but rooted in the natural law inscribed by the Creator on the conscience of every human being (cf.

Rom 2:14-15). Does not every one of us sense deep within his or her conscience a call to make a personal contribution to the common good and to peace in society? Globalization eliminates certain barriers, but is still able to build new ones; it brings peoples together, but spatial and temporal proximity does not of itself create the conditions for true communion and authentic peace. Effective means to redress the marginalization of the world’s poor through globalization will only be found if people everywhere feel personally outraged by the injustices in the world and by the concomitant violations of human rights. The Church, which is the “sign and instrument of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race” will continue to offer her contribution so that injustices and misunderstandings may be resolved, leading to a world of greater peace and solidarity.

In the field of international commerce and finance, there are processes at work today which permit a positive integration of economies, leading to an overall improvement in conditions, but there are also processes tending in the opposite direction, dividing and marginalizing peoples, and creating dangerous situations that can erupt into wars and conflicts. Since the Second World War, international trade in goods and services has grown extraordinarily fast, with a momentum unprecedented in history. Much of this global trade has involved countries that were industrialized early, with the significant addition of many newly-emerging countries which have now entered onto the world stage. Yet there are other low-income countries which are still seriously marginalized in terms of trade. Their growth has been negatively influenced by the rapid decline, seen in recent decades, in the prices of commodities, which constitute practically the whole of their exports. In these countries, which are mostly in Africa, dependence on the exportation of commodities continues to constitute a potent risk factor. Here I should like to renew an appeal for all countries to be given equal opportunities of access to the world market, without exclusion or marginalization.

A similar reflection may be made in the area of finance, which is a key aspect of the phenomenon of globalization, owing to the development of technology and policies of liberalization in the flow of capital between countries. Objectively, the most important function of finance is to sustain the possibility of long term investment and hence of development. Today this appears extremely fragile: it is experiencing the negative repercussions of a system of financial dealings – both national and global – based upon very short-term thinking, which aims at increasing the value of financial operations and concentrates on the technical management of various forms of risk. The recent crisis demonstrates how financial activity can at times be completely turned in on itself,

lacking any long-term consideration of the common good. This lowering of the objectives of global finance to the very short term reduces its capacity to function as a bridge between the present and the future, and as a stimulus to the creation of new opportunities for production and for work in the long term. Finance limited in this way to the short and very short term becomes dangerous for everyone, even for those who benefit when the markets perform well.

All of this would indicate that the fight against poverty requires cooperation both on the economic level and on the legal level, so as to allow the international community, and especially poorer countries, to identify and implement coordinated strategies to deal with the problems discussed above, thereby providing an effective legal framework for the economy. Incentives are needed for establishing efficient participatory institutions, and support is needed in fighting crime and fostering a culture of legality. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that policies which place too much emphasis on assistance underlie many of the failures in providing aid to poor countries. Investing in the formation of people and developing a specific and well-integrated culture of enterprise would seem at present to be the right approach in the medium and long term. If economic activities require a favourable context in order to develop, this must not distract attention from the need to generate revenue. While it has been rightly emphasized that increasing per capita income cannot be the ultimate goal of political and economic activity, it is still an important means of attaining the objective of the fight against hunger and absolute poverty. Hence, the illusion that a policy of mere redistribution of existing wealth can definitively resolve the problem must be set aside. In a modern economy, the value of assets is utterly dependent on the capacity to generate revenue in the present and the future. Wealth creation therefore becomes an inescapable duty, which must be kept in mind if the fight against material poverty is to be effective in the long term.

If the poor are to be given priority, then there has to be enough room for an ethical approach to economics on the part of those active in the international market, an ethical approach to politics on the part of those in public office, and an ethical approach to participation capable of harnessing the contributions of civil society at local and international levels. International agencies themselves have come to recognize the value and advantage of economic initiatives taken by civil society or local administrations to promote the emancipation and social inclusion of those sectors of the population that often fall below the threshold of extreme poverty and yet are not easily reached by official aid. The history of twentieth-century economic development teaches us that good development policies depend for their effectiveness on

responsible implementation by human agents and on the creation of positive partnerships between markets, civil society and States. Civil society in particular plays a key part in every process of development, since development is essentially a cultural phenomenon, and culture is born and develops in the civil sphere.

As my venerable Predecessor Pope John Paul II had occasion to remark, globalization “is notably ambivalent” and therefore needs to be managed with great prudence. This will include giving priority to the needs of the world’s poor, and overcoming the scandal of the imbalance between the problems of poverty and the measures which have been adopted in order to address them. The imbalance lies both in the cultural and political order and in the spiritual and moral order. In fact we often consider only the superficial and instrumental causes of poverty without attending to those harboured within the human heart, like greed and narrow vision. The problems of development, aid and international cooperation are sometimes addressed without any real attention to the human element, but as merely technical questions – limited, that is, to establishing structures, setting up trade agreements, and allocating funding impersonally. What the fight against poverty really needs are men and women who live in a profoundly fraternal way and are able to accompany individuals, families and communities on journeys of authentic human development. §



St. Ambrose Prayer Book has proven popular since its introduction in January. It is available on the www.Andrewespress.com site for Credit Card or PayPal purchases and from LA Press, PO BOX 460186, Glendale, CO 80246 and at several bookstores for \$30⁰⁰ and at a Trade discount in quantities of 10 or more to churches and schools and resellers.

THE MYSTERY OF MONASTICISM

Dom James M. Deschene

A MONK is a man of mystery. He is a mystery partly, though least importantly, because in our day and age he is little seen, little understood. He seems to be a romantic anachronism living out some medieval dream. To the outsider, monasteries are mysterious places and the monks within are always curiosities. Those who visit the monastery expect to find, in the words of Saint Athanasius written centuries ago, “an altogether different country, cut off from the rest of the world, and the inhabitants of that country have no thought than to live in love and justice.”

There is, however, a larger sense in which the monk is a man of mystery. For it is the monk, more than other men, who plunges his whole life into the very depths of the human adventure, into depths where the human adventure is discovered to be a response to a mysterious divine call. In that secret place, in the very heart of our being, a Voice, full of quiet power, speaks:

I love you. Before the world was made, before the first tick of time, I loved you. I have made you for myself because I love you. And when the universe lies cold and lifeless, I will love you still. Come, my beloved one. Walk with me. Give me your heart.

To hear those words uttered in the stillness of our hearts is to know real terror. For, like any human love, they demand of us a commitment of our very being. Yet unlike human love, their demand on us is an infinite one. We are asked to surrender ourselves utterly into those divine hands, to withhold nothing.

We are afraid of such a love:

For, though I knew His Love Who followed,

Yet was I sore adread

Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside.

(Francis Thompson, *The Hound of Heaven*)

In the face of this demand it is easy to see why we flee from God into busy-ness, noise, distraction. Who of us can bear to be so loved? Or to offer such a love in return?

Yet this love and this demand are at the very heart of our religion. God is love. And as hard as that is to believe, many find it even harder to believe that this God, this Love, loves them — infinitely (for God can do no less). This is a love that asks us to die to everything but itself, to be willing to abandon every possession, every security, every earthly thing and to leap into the dark from which God calls to us. From this darkness, from this call, from this unspeakably demanding love, we try to escape and flee.

The monk does not. And insofar as man's final rest and fulfillment lie solely in God, the monk stands before us as a challenge and a sign of what we truly are and of where our lives will truly find their ending: in utter abandonment to the love of God. Both the Christian monk and the ordinary Christian are

called to the same high and mysterious destiny.

When Christ orders us to follow the narrow path, he addresses himself to all men. The monk and the lay person must attain the same heights. (St. John Chrysostom, In Epist. Ad Hebraeos)

The monk is different in that he commits himself to this goal single-heartedly and in deadly earnest, surrendering all that might hinder the search.

He who hears the voice of God must recognize that he is called to an adventure whose ending he cannot foresee because it is in the hands of God. That is the risk and the challenge of the monastic calling: we surrender our lives into the hands of God and never take them back. (Thomas Merton, *Cistercian Life*)

The monk is willing to suffer the loss of all things, if only Christ be gained (Ph 3:8). All the details of his life are simplified, streamlined, so that he lives with a clarity and single-mindedness often missing from the lives of other men and women. The monk is called to be the unified, integrated man whose life is centered on one thing only — the love and service of God. And yet, for all this, we must not see the monk as special or basically different from others. Rather, he is a sign, a kind of sacrament or incarnation, of every person's specialness and vocation — to seek the God in whom alone the human heart finds rest, life and joy.

Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord. And our hearts will find no rest until they rest in thee. (Saint Augustine, *Confessions*)

The monk is also a man of despair. By being utterly honest with himself, he has come to admit the hopelessness of what the world calls good — the illusions, the empty materialism — and knows in his heart that these values can bring no one to God, but often aid a man in hiding from the demands of the infinite Lover. Yet this despair for the monk is a salutary despair, for it enables him to discard these conventional and false values and to put in their place the only true values — love, mercy, justice, peace, joy.

So the monk withdraws from the city into the desert, the wilderness. He becomes an outlaw, a stranger. Yet his apartness and withdrawal are, paradoxically, signs of his deep loyalty to the family of man. In refusing to live by the values that demean human beings, the monk affirms in himself and for his brothers and sisters the true value of men and women in God's sight. Out of love for his brothers and sisters, the monk will not consent to a life that enslaves in falseness and futility.

Here too the monk enters upon a mystery. For he enters a way he does not know, a journey without maps, a land untraveled by most men and women, an uncharted wilderness. Like the Chosen People of old, he is called and led by God deeper and deeper into this unknown country. Gone are all the familiar contours of the human landscape and social life. Gone are

the security and assurance of old and comfortable habits of life. There remains in that dry desert air only the single Voice that calls one onward: "Come, my beloved one. Walk with me. Give me your heart."

Abandoning all to follow that call, the monk advances on his journey without maps. He is a fool to do so, but he is a fool for Christ's sake; and like his Master, he confounds the wisdom of the world by living out the wisdom of God.

Seeing the monk's foolishness, men ask: "What is the use of all this?" And the monk can give no answer. His way is not essentially a way of profit or usefulness or productivity. His life is, in the eyes of the world, a pointless one. The world never ceases to be amazed at this, and so it asks again: "What is the point of all this?" Again the monk is silent.

Silence is his message. The question has been asked; that is point enough. The monk has proclaimed by his very presence the absurdity of a world apart from Christ. So long as a single monk lives, men will have a reason to question the ways and values of their world.

Wars, revolutions, social, political and economic upheavals are the tools the world uses to bring about change. Against all these the monk proclaims by his life the one power that can heal and change the world — transfiguration through love and grace. And this always happens in secret, in silence, in the depths where man meets God in love. Then and there is the wounded human heart filled with healing, joy and peace, which are the monk's final gifts to suffering humanity. By surrendering himself, he has been healed, and through him flow into the world the gifts the world has ever sought but rarely found.

Healing, joy, peace — the gifts of Christ. They may be had only by a surrender to Christ's love, by a death to all things that would separate one from his love. The monk reminds us of this.

If the monk is to "reestablish all things in Christ," he must be ready to disestablish all things in himself. Like Christ, he must empty himself, becoming obedient unto death. (Hubert van Zeller, *The Holy Rule*)

Obedience – Death – these are harsh and fearful realities for modern man. The monk, like Christ, is a man of obedience unto death. He seeks to be admitted, in love, to the heart of the mystery of the suffering Christ and to become one with that sacrifice whereby the whole world is made a new creation. He goes through death with Christ to rise in the dewy morning of a world recreated in the risen Lord. Only through obedience and death can the gifts of the new creation—joy, healing, peace—be brought to man. Our own baptism showed us this, as we were plunged into the mystery of Christ's death so we might rise with him in his new life. The monk is a living sign of baptism. In his own transfiguration through grace, having become a wholly new creature, the monk brings back into our struggling world something of the freshness and innocence of Eden.

The monk is also a sign of the end, of the coming kingdom. "Thy kingdom come," we pray, dreading that our prayer might be answered. For the kingdom (we know) will mean the end of all our petty security, our dishonesties, our comfortable habits. In the monk we see a sign of this coming kingdom. Yet in him we see too that the end, though it will be an utter catastrophe for our old ways, will finally be a deep and gracious blessing, filling our lifelong emptiness with the gifts of healing, joy and love. In the monk God gives us a living sign of this hope, a sign that Christ has already overcome the world: Easter has happened, the power of death has been vanquished, and all our fears are groundless.

All that thy child's mistake

Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home;

Rise, clasp my hand, and come! (*The Hound of Heaven*)

We see too in the monastery itself—in this community of brothers gathered in love and mutual service, and centered and grounded in Christ — a sign of the coming kingdom. In the sonship of the monks and the fatherhood of the abbot, all gathered in loving fellowship, we catch glimmerings of the mystery of the Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit. In the monastic Church, microcosm of the universal Church, with the monks gathered in Eucharist about the altar, we have a living sign of the Body of Christ. And in the fidelity of the monks to liturgical and contemplative prayer, we can discover anew that the worship and praise of God is the final destiny of man. For worship — "With my body I thee worship" — is but another word for love.

The monk is indeed a man of mystery and of mysteries — mysteries of vocation, of surrender, of suffering; of obedience, of death, of resurrection; of the kingdom and of the Trinity. Perhaps most simply, though, he is a sign of the mystery of love which is the deep mystery of God.

In our days, as always, men and women need signs of the mystery of God at work in their hearts. We need to know that, deep in the heart of humanity, silent monks are vigilant at prayer, sustaining in their hidden work the lives of their brothers and sisters. Saint Silouan of Mount Athos captures for us the essence of this hidden monastic vocation: "There are people who say that monks ought to be of some use in the world, and not eat bread they have not toiled for; but we have to understand the nature of a monk's service and the way in which he has to help the world. A monk is someone who prays for the whole world, who weeps for the whole world; and in this lies his main work.... Thanks to monks, prayer continues unceasing on earth, and the whole world profits.... St Sergius by fasting and prayer helped the Russian people to free themselves from the Tatar yoke. St Seraphim prayed silently, and the Holy Spirit descended on Motovilov. And this is the task of the monk.... Perhaps you will say that nowadays there are no monks like that, who would pray for the whole world; but I tell you that when there are no men of prayer on the earth, the world will come to an end.... The world is supported by the prayers of the saints."

VALENTINE'S DAY, 2009

By Frank Zaveral

VALENTINE'S DAY. Yet another chance for the retailers, chocolatiers, jewelers, florists and others to make some profit, knowing that it would be another nine months before they have a chance to turn a losing fiscal year into a winning one.

Husbands, boy friends, lovers, girl friends and wives will be shopping for something for their special person. At some point in life, it is a driving force of romance. It might begin as young as kindergarten or grade school. It certainly is well underway by adolescence. I remember what it was like. Those little Valentine cards which over time evolved into bigger and more elaborate cards. And I can certainly recall who received the most of them: cute girls who had a special magic about them, a beguiling charm which even in grade school drew the dreams of romance from deep in the hearts of boys who wanted some kind of recognition, a return Valentine card, a wink and maybe, just maybe, ultimately a date. In first grade, I was just happy to have a sweet little girl tie my shoe laces, a great Valentine gift!

Of course, it was not just my time in the early years of school when all this took place. I heard stories of my own maternal grandparents exchanging cards and little notes (written in Latin). Goes to demonstrate that Latin works for every occasion and from generation to generation. *Te amo* never changes. An acquaintance of mine recently told me that he asked his grandmother if what goes on now with dating, etc. took place when she was a girl. "Yes," she said, "but with class."

The great highlight of all the Valentine's day activities arrives when a serious proposition is at hand – in my case, a wife named Stephanie, my pride and joy and eternal Valentine. Sadly, for some who get tired of the holiday, the affair becomes a last minute ditch effort to obtain a suitable card and perhaps a gift to go along with it. Indeed, it might be such a hassle that an administrative assistant (who used to be known as a secretary) at the office is asked to take care of getting the appropriate card and gift. That's quite a devaluation from the heart throbs of earlier years. The only thing that could be worse would be to become a Valentine's Day Grinch and slink around people's homes to steal the gifts that demonstrate love and caring.

In addition to the dreams of childhood romance, my father's birthday was February 14 (1907), so he became the honored as well as a gift-giver to my mother. He never failed to give a large card to his loved one along with a box of Russell Stover candy, probably from now defunct Woolworth. And speaking of fathers and other relatives, the greeting card industry has figured out that Valentine's Day is not just for romance,

or the hopes of it, or some special friendship. There are cards for dads, moms, uncles, aunts, grandparents, teachers . . . one wonders if there is a suitable one for the parish priest!

Where did all this start? Merchant and manufacturer greed? A "Hallmark Holiday?" Something related to a pagan ritual? With early Christians? After all, some religious calendars say "St. Valentine's Day" while secular calendars merely say Valentine's Day. This is where the whole matter becomes confusing. Even the Roman Church now honors Sts. Cyril and Methodius on February 14 rather than St. Valentine.

There were two (or three?) Valentines whose feast days were originally February 14. On February 14, c.a. 197 A.D. St. Valentine, a bishop from Terni, about 60 miles from Rome, was beheaded and was buried on Via Flaminia. Another St. Valentine, a Roman priest and doctor, was beheaded on February 14, c.a. 269 A.D. He also was buried on Via Flaminia, where a basilica to him was built in 350. Some believe there is only one Valentine and that these two are the same person. Scholars disagree about which St. Valentine is linked to romance; some say the Valentine of Rome, others the Valentine of Terni. A third Valentine was martyred in Africa, but nothing more is known.

The lore of St. Valentine (one of the two in Italy) arose from the persecution of Christians by Roman emperor Claudius II. Some versions have Claudius attempting to convince Valentine to renounce Christianity, and when Valentine refused to do so, and attempting to convert Claudius to Christianity instead, the emperor was enraged and had Valentine executed. Before death, he performed a miracle by healing a blind girl. In another version, Valentine refused to follow orders of the emperor that young men not be married; married men did not make good soldiers. Valentine continued performing marriage ceremonies, was arrested and executed. Before he died, however, he sent a "Valentine note" to a young woman, perhaps the blind girl healed in the other account, and signed it "from your Valentine," thus inventing the first Valentine card. No matter which account is accurate or which Valentine did what, archeologists have discovered a Roman catacomb and a church dedicated to St. Valentine, so there clearly was a person named Valentine.

The Romans had a pagan period devoted to fertility, Lupercalia, between February 13th and February 15th. It apparently had no overtones of romance as we know it. The feast was called the Lupercalia (lupus is Latin for wolf) in honor of the pagan god Lupercus. He was associated with the Lupercal, a cave where Romulus and Remus, the famous founders of Rome, were nursed by a female wolf. Some hypothesize that the Christians attempted to replace Lupercalia with St. Valentine's Day in order to distract from paganisms, but this theory apparently has no validity. Indeed, the common view of historians is that no romance was connected with February

14 until Chaucer wrote his *Parlement of Foules* in 1382, but even this is subject to debate.

In many countries, spring is considered to begin on February 14th, the day on which birds choose their mates. In parts of Sussex, England, for example, Valentine's Day has been called "the birds' wedding day." In my paternal grandparents' homeland, Slovenia, St. Valentine brings the "keys of roots" signaling that on February 14th plants begin to grow and work in the fields can begin. Similarly, on that day in Slovenia, birds propose to each other or marry. But one has to wonder if spring begins earlier in Sussex or in Slovenia than in other countries. Even the swallows wait until mid-March (March 19, the Feast of St. Joseph) to return to San Juan Capistrano, California, which has a far better climate than Slovenia.

The modern era of sending cards and gifts on St. Valentine's Day began with gusto in the mid-nineteenth century, and of course has flourished to the point where billions of cards are sent and multiple material things are given, now made even easier with internet shopping and text messaging.

The take-away from all of this is that Christians should be in love all the time. Not necessarily in the romantic sense, which is certainly acceptable given the right time and place, and not in the pursuit of vice, commercial or otherwise, but as lovers of Christ our God, of the saints, of our Church, of our fellow mankind and the earth that sustains us. Is it an accident that the predominant color of our modern Valentine's Day is red? I don't think so. Red is the color of blood, the color of martyrs.

Our agape love should be so strong that we, just as St. Valentine, ought to be willing to be martyrs for all those whom we love and for the principles of our life. Scripture makes it plain: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) Easier said than done. "God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16) And harder yet is Christ's admonition "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you . . ." (Matthew 5:44) The word "love" is mentioned more than 200 times in the New Testament, demonstrating its importance to Christians, not just on February 14th, which of course is never mentioned in the New Testament, but on every day.

A prayer to St. Valentine given to us by our Eastern Orthodox brethren is appropriate:

"Thou hast become like the Apostles in their states, a successor to their throne, finding indeed the intelligential ladder, O thou God-inspired. Therefore, thou hast followed the Word of God in righteousness, and striven unto blood for the Faith. O Martyr among Priests, Saint Valentine, intercede with Christ our God to save our souls." Troparion (Tone 4)



A new icon of the *Anastasis* (Resurrection) of our Lord has been completed by Mary Gay Sullivan Coit. This icon is about eight feet tall and is just above and behind the Baptismal Font.

The panel was prepared in the parish hall and carried around the Church so as to be mounted in place. After that the painting and application of gold leaf required many weeks of work during which the whole project was visible to the faithful. Reproductions of this icon should be available by the last week of March.

THE LION

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FEBRUARY MMIX

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Please note that Choir rehearsals and other Guild meetings are announced in the Sunday bulletins as appropriate.

Please see other useful web sites at : www.andrewespress.com and <http://saintlaurenceosb.org/>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 EPIPHANY IV S. Ignatius of Antioch Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM AC Matins – 9:45 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	2 Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary Morning Mass 8:30 AM	3 St. Blaise The Clergy Retreat is again at the Spiritual Life Center in Wichita, Kansas. Fr. John will assist with the Liturgical sessions on Western Rite and provide a book table representing the publications of Lancelot Andrewes Press. Rdr John Woolley has received Bp Basil's blessing to be ordained as a Subdeacon at St. George's Cathedral on Friday, 6 February during the Divine Liturgy with most of the Priests and Deacons of the Diocese present. The annual meeting of the St. Raphael Clergy Brotherhood will follow with a breakfast hosted by St. George's. Sorry we cannot offer an evening Mass on Purification. -Fr. John	4 THE NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA	5 ST. AGATHA	6 St. Photius Evensong – 5:00 PM	7 S. Romuald, Ab. Rosary – 8 AM Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass 9:00 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM
8 EPIPHANY V Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM PARISH MEETING 9:00 AM AC Matins – 9:45 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	9 St. Apollonia Fr. David Mustian announces the ground breaking of the new St. Luke's Church in Erie, Colorado for 14 February at 9:30 o'clock with Bp. Basil presiding. A reception will follow at the Erie Community Center. We will move our Saturday shedule arhead by 1/2 hour in order to participate.	10 St. Scholastica	11 St. Gregory II St. Benedict of Aniane Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Mass 12 NOON Evensong 5:00 PM	12 Feria Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Mass 12 NOON Evensong 5:00 PM	13 St. Kentigern, Bishop Conf. Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Mass 12 NOON Evensong 5:00 PM	14 Saturday Office of Our Lady <i>St. Valentine, Priest & Martyr</i> Rosary – 7:30 AM Matins – 8:00 AM Latin Mass – 8:30 ST. LUKE'S 9:30 Evensong – 5:00 PM
15 SEPTUAGESIMA Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM AC Matins – 9:45 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	16 Feria The Great Synod of Denver meets this week to sort out Calendrical and other issues of research regarding an Altar Missal for the AWRV. Lord have mercy.	17 Feria	18 Feria St. Simeon of Jerusalem Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Mass 12 NOON Evensong 5:00 PM	19 Feria Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM	20 REQUIEM MASS of ALL SOULS Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM	21 Feria Rosary – 8 AM Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM
22 SEXAGESIMA CHAIR OF ST. PETER AT ANTIOCH Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM AC Matins – 9:45 AM High Mass – 10 AM CHURCH WOMEN'S MEETING Evensong – 4 PM	23 Feria <i>Vigil of St. Matthias</i>	24 St. Matthias the Apostle MATINS 9:30 MASS 10:00 AM	25 St. Wallburga, V. Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Mass 12 NOON Evensong 5:00 PM	26 Feria St. Ethelbert Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM	27 Feria St. Alexander Matins – 7:00 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM	28 Feria St. Oswald Rosary – 8 AM Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Evensong – 5:00 PM



The Trant family went to the Laver of Regeneration on Saturday and Chrismation and First Communions on Sunday in January. From Left are Acolyte Daniel Brainerd and his brother Nicholas who loves to attend Baptisms. Mr. Travis (John) Trant, Thomas, Samuel, mom Sophia and Theodore. The family have moved to Snowmass, Colorado as Travis works for the Colorado Division of Wildlife and newly assigned to that area of the State.



The latest printing of icon reproductions of the work of Archdiocesan Iconographer Mary Gay Sullivan Coit have arrived and are now available for \$ 22.00 in the bookstore. Among these are Ss. Cecilia, Agnes, and Katherine of Alexandria: A normal Orthodox practice is to establish an 'icon corner' in the house where the family members see the images of Christ and the Virgin Mother and other Saints and make daily devotions there. The Church is the 'para oichos' or 'other house' while the family home is also a church and place of the communion of meals and expression of charity.



The Churchwomen's President, Dana Huft, here presents Fr. John with a cheque for \$ 5,000 to complete the most extensive overhaul of the might Wicks Pipe Organ since we acquired the instrument in 1990. The donations of the Faithful have covered the cost of \$ 16,300 for this work. The entire Organ is being rebuilt and several ranks of new Pipes installed to totally transform the musical capacity of the instrument. The work will resume in mid February and we expect completion by the first week of March, God helping. The improvements to the fabric of our Church and Worship are remarkable and all due to the prayers, care, and generous cash contributions of the Faithful. Thanks be to God.