

Lenten Reflection

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

By Sister Betty Sundry, CDP



We are now into the 21st day of Lent 2016. How is it going for you? Have you been able to keep to the promises/pledges you wanted to strive for this Lent?

A few weeks back, on Ash Wednesday I walked into a Verizon store and one of the techs (clerk) said to me, “Happy Ash Wednesday.” For a brief moment I was slightly baffled and then I realized he was referring to the ashes on my forehead which I had forgotten were there. I said to him, “I guess I can’t deny I received ashes today.” Unexpectedly he said, “On you they look fine.” Surprisingly, when the clerk said that, it had an impact on me that I did not anticipate. He made me think in a more insightful way on the meaning of the ashes. Yes, that morning the person who gave me the ashes said the words, ‘Repent and believe in the Gospel.’ I thought: how seriously did I take the need for reparation and how was I planning to strive to live the Gospel? That clerk doesn’t know it, but he has been helpful for me to go deeper in many of my morning meditations this Lent.

Fran Rossi Szpylczyn in her reflections for February 13 ([Give Us This Day](#)), says “There are bad habits and unhealthy patterns in all of our lives, baggage we hold tightly. Can we strip away the comfort of convenience or routine in order to follow Jesus to the dry barren wasteland of the desert?” She says further, “The desert won’t allow for much luggage, so in the end, something must change if we want to be transformed with Jesus. The only way through the hot sand is to *let go*.” Words I have pondered on much this Lent.

As I go through this Lenten season, the tech at Verizon and Fran Szpylczyn’s words bring to mind a poem I once read by Ted Loder that encourages me to *stay the course*. The poem is entitled: “Catch Me in My Scurrying.”

*Catch me in my mindless scurrying, Lord,
And hold me in this Lenten season:
Hold my spirit to the beacon of your grace
And grant me light enough to walk boldly,
to feel passionately,
to love aggressively;
grant me peace enough to want more,
to work for more,
and to submit to nothing less,
and to fear You...only You!
Bequeath me not becalmed seas,
slack sails and premature benedictions,
but breathe into me a torment,
storm enough to make within myself
and from myself something...
something new, something saving,
something true, a gladness of heart,
a pitch for a song in the storm, a word of praise lived,
a gratitude shared,
a cross dared,
a joy received...*