

March 2010

**Dear Sisters and Brothers,**

As we enter March, we are already immersed in the Lenten journey of the church. This month, the Sunday gospels offer a message of hope: Our God is a God of second chances. Note how the theme unfolds: The gardener pleads for another year for the barren fig tree; the Samaritan woman at the well is given the water of life; a father welcomes his prodigal son back with open arms; a man born blind receives his sight; Jesus wins a reprieve for the woman caught in adultery; and Lazarus is raised from the dead! Undoubtedly, the message of our Lenten scripture confirms that following Jesus means getting a second chance at life.

What a wonderful source of consolation amid so many stories of “bad news” in our world and perhaps even in our own lives. Our God is a God of forgiveness and second chances. Called to imitate that all-compassionate God, may we be generous with mercy and forgiveness for ourselves and for our neighbors!

Before the month ends, we will enter Holy Week. On Passion Sunday, we will walk the cobbled streets of Jerusalem with Jesus. We will look at Peter and see ourselves denying that we belong to Jesus. We will see in Judas the same weakness that sells out rather than stands up for the faith. Standing amid the crowds and listening to the goading of the chief priests and scribes, we will remember how easy it is to remain silent in the face of evil or simply to go along with the misguided majority. In Pilate we will see reflected our own indecisiveness; we will listen to the mocking and jeering leveled at the just Jesus and be ashamed that we allow similar injustices to go unchecked in our world.

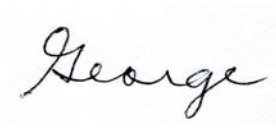
Will we, like the women of Jerusalem who wept for Jesus, also weep for the downtrodden of this world and do something to alleviate their suffering? Will we, like Simon, who helped Jesus carry his cross, help others carry their burdens through life? Finally, as the Passion proclamation comes to an end, we will stand at the rock-hewn tomb where they laid Jesus’ body, and we will be grateful that we know the rest of the story yet to be told and celebrated on Easter.

Attached is a list of feast days in March. I remind you of two special feasts we celebrate this month—the Feast of St. Joseph on March 19 and the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord on March 25. Both feasts call for special intentions at

the Eucharist for those of us in the Society of Mary. Through the kindness of Brother John Samaha, there are several helpful resources for our reflection and use at prayer on the Feast of St. Joseph. These resources may be accessed on the [PORTAL](#) under "Liturgies" and then "Various other prayers."

As we journey again through the holiest season of our faith, may Mary be a model of humble yet confident prayer. Joined with our almsgiving and fasting, may our prayer carry us on our Lenten journey!

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

George J. Cerniglia, S.M.  
Assistant for Religious Life