



# JOURNEYS

## URSULINE SISTERS

of the Roman Union † United States Provinces

February, 2016

Dear Friends,

Doesn't it seem like we just finished celebrating Christmas? How can it almost be Ash Wednesday? It sometimes is a challenge to shift our spiritual gears. But it also is life-giving. That's what Lent is all about—opening ourselves to the new way of life which Christ offers us in his life, death, and Resurrection. As children we often grow up thinking that Lent is a time of serious self-denial: no candy, no entertainment, lots of sacrifices. As we mature, we learn that Lent is a call to grow in discipleship, and that prayer, fasting and almsgiving help us stay focused on this goal. In Lent, the Church offers us a six-week retreat to look carefully at our priorities, see how they match-up with the Gospel, and recalculate our course. Lent challenges us to turn our prayer into action for those who are in need. This retreat culminates in the three holiest days of the liturgical year—Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Let's hold one another in prayer as we enter wholeheartedly into this sacred season of Lent.

United in prayer,

*Fr. Jan Hopman, OSU*

Lent is an important time to do a top-to-bottom review of what we value and what we actually do.

### For Reflection

1. What comes to mind when I think about Lent?
2. How does the call to grow in discipleship inform the discernment of my vocation?
3. What will I do this Lent to make it a life-giving season?

*Angela Merici*

## Scripture Helps

Spend time praying with [Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18](#)—the Gospel for Ash Wednesday. Listen to Jesus instruct his disciples about how they are to give alms, pray and fast. Read the passage slowly, several times, and notice what word, phrase, or image attracts your attention. Stay with what speaks. Then use your own words to ask Jesus to instruct you how you are to give alms, pray, and fast during these weeks of Lent.



Another Lenten Gospel (*Second Sunday of Lent*) for prayer is [Luke 9:28-36](#). In your imagination, join Peter, John, and James as they climb the mountain with Jesus to pray. Watch as Jesus' face and clothing change. Hear God say to the disciples (and also to you): *This is my chosen Son; listen to him*. Reflect on when, where and how you listen to Jesus. Pray about how you might find extra time to do this during the Lenten season.

## Other Resources

A great site to visit as you prepare for Lent is [Praying Lent](#). Here you'll find articles, prayers, book groups, videos and online retreats. It is part of the Creighton University online ministries.

Consider using Pope Francis' letter to open the Year of Mercy—[Misericordiae Vultus](#): Jesus is the Face of the Father's Mercy—to guide your Lenten practices. You might also visit the [Jubilee Year of Mercy page](#) to find further inspiration from Pope Francis.

Many Catholic parishes offer free print resources for Lent. See if your parish or campus ministry office is offering *Rediscover Jesus* by popular author Matthew Kelly. You can order a free copy at [Best Lent Ever 2016](#) and also sign up for daily online Lenten meditations and videos.

[Loyola Press](#) is another great site for free Lenten resources. You'll find videos, online retreats, suggestions for spiritual reading, Stations of the Cross and much, much more.

For more information, contact Sr. Elisa Ryan at [elisaosu@gmail.com](mailto:elisaosu@gmail.com) or Sr. Jean Hopman at [hopmanj@gmail.com](mailto:hopmanj@gmail.com). If you no longer wish to receive these e-letters, contact Sr. Elisa and she will remove your address.

Ursuline Vocation Office ● 353 S. Sappington Rd. ● Kirkwood, MO. ● [www.usaosu.org](http://www.usaosu.org)

Angela Merici