

Spiritual Reflections for the month of April 2025

Please choose a reflection and mediation

Lent should be more than a time of fasting. It should be a joyous time of feasting.
Lent is a time to fast from certain things and feast on others.

It is a season in which we are invited to:

Fast from judging others; Feast on the Christ dwelling within them.
Fast from emphasis on differences; Feast on the unity of all life.
Fast from apparent darkness; Feast on the reality of light.
Fast from thoughts of illness; Feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute; Feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger; Feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism; Feast on optimism.
Fast from worry; Feast on divine order.

Fast from complaining; Feast on affirmatives.
Fast from negatives; Feast on positives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures; Feast on unceasing prayer.
Fast from hostility; Feast on nonresistance.
Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-absorption; Feast on compassion for others,
Fast from suspicion; Feast on truth.
Fast from idle gossip. Feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from discontent, anger, bitterness,
self-concern, discouragement, laziness, suspicion, guilt.
Feast on gratitude, patience, forgiveness,
compassion for others, hope, commitment, truth, the mercy of God.

Lent is just such a time of fasting and feasting!

- submitted by Vincentian Mike Wiley, Our Lady of Sorrows, Etobicoke Particular Council

Leading by Example

In a letter of 1659 to Louise Marie de Gonzague, Queen of Poland, St. Vincent de Paul commends her leadership by example:

“He [Father Desdames] . . . informed me that Your Majesty purchased a splendid mansion in order to have poor girls educated in it by the Sisters of Charity. . . I then clearly saw the gratitude of those poor Daughters, which was so great that I confess I never saw them so deeply moved as at the recital I made of Your Majesty’s kindness and patience with them, and, especially, when I told them that Your Majesty was accustomed to spin and wind the thread needed to prepare linen for the poor and for themselves, and that this is unexampled in the history of God’s Church. . . I never remember having read that any woman’s devotion induced her, as Your Majesty has done, to employ the work of her hands in the service of the poor.”¹

Question:

What does leadership by example mean to you? Where have you seen it in the context of service?

Prayer:

"Lord, as we strive to lead in the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul, grant us the grace to be servant-leaders, prioritizing the needs of others above our own. Inspire us with humility, compassion, and a deep sense of responsibility, so that we may serve with integrity and effectiveness. May our leadership be a source of strength and hope, always seeking to uplift and empower those around us, especially the vulnerable and marginalized. Amen.

*- submitted by Vincentian Alex Damm, Spirituality Committee
& St. Jerome’s Peel North Particular Council*

¹ From Letters of St. Vincent de Paul, Translated and Edited by Joseph Leonard, with an Introduction by Henri Bremond (London: Burnes Oates & Washbourne, 1937), 410 (#2950).