

January 30, 2008

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Very quickly, it seems, we have journeyed through the Christmas and Epiphany season and are now on the brink of Lent. Lent is that annual journey taking us into the depths of God's mystery. Juggling life's daily demands sometimes makes the season pass quickly and routinely. I want to encourage each of us to enter concretely into this Lenten season, to listen carefully to the challenges of living our faith and our religious commitment, and to plumb the depths of our spiritual lives.

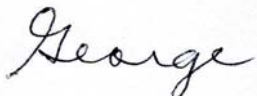
There are many Lenten resources available at bookstores and on the Internet. Try to make use of one or the other of them this year along with the daily cycle of scripture readings. Let the words sink in. Ask yourselves: How can the gospel apply to my life? Do I need to make some change in my life, in my attitudes, in my behavior? Simply said, that is the process of conversion, a process that lasts a lifetime. That is the journey, too, of Lent and Easter.

Almost in the middle of the month of February, the church will mark the 150th anniversary of the apparitions at Lourdes. Theologians agree that the events at Lourdes had a significant effect on modern Catholicism. For us Marianists, it is another opportunity to make our patroness, the Blessed Virgin Mary, better known, loved and served.

The beginning of Lent early in the month will permeate our liturgical life these days. However, there are a few specific feasts to note (attached). As a Marianist Family, we pray in a special way on February 2, the anniversary of the consecration of the first 11 members of the Bordeaux sodality.

May our Lenten journey help us be united as a church and as a Marianist Family to the crying needs of our world, and let us pray in particular for God's peace on us all!

Affectionately,

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

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

Please note: This e-mail is being sent to the following: all SMs and FMIs in the U.S.; district superiors and expatriates in the three districts; members of the GA; Province staff; and representatives of the MLNNA. If someone in your community does not have an e-mail address, please print this out for them.