

A Deeper Promise this Lenten Season

By Shannon Clarke
February 2021



The Lenten season is upon us and as a Marianist, I know I am called to do more than just give up my vices of ice cream and swearing as I prepare my heart for Jesus. Last year our Lenten promises might have looked different as we navigated the unknowns of this pandemic. As we have become more familiar with the new “norms” there are ways in which we can celebrate the work that is being done in various communities across the country that advocate for social justice even with the barriers of the pandemic. As the Marianist Family we have learned to navigate these barriers and have been able to safely come together in prayer, in education, and in advocacy.

In the last six months of 2020 we saw an inhumane number of federal executions carried out. Not only were these executions inhumane, they were unacceptable. As we move towards a time of healing in our country, I hold hope that the protection of life for those on death row will be made into federal law. Our Holy Father has expressed the Catholic Church’s stance on the death penalty when he stated, “The death penalty is inadmissible, and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide.” I challenge the Marianist Family to the commitment of living and advocating for others this Lenten season.

Mary Beaudoin so beautifully stated in last month’s *Justice Jottings*, “Being a whole community requires that we face the harm we cause as well as the harm we suffer and that we practice forgiveness so that we can move forward together.” As we move forward with one another this season may we take small leaps to become educated on issues that matter most.

A suggestion: spend each Friday in Lent dedicating time to reading a book or watching a documentary that encourages you to lean into your own discomfort, reckon with your individual privilege, and strive to be a stronger advocate and ally to various causes in your community.

As Jesus prepared for His 40-day journey in the desert out of His love for us, may we express that love to one another. In our prayers, in our fasting, and in our struggles this season, let us pray for each other and for those that have no one to pray for them and their healing. May we commit ourselves to a Lenten journey that brings forth the dignity of all humanity.