

A Coffee with Alessio



Lent Part I

Welcome to Lent everybody! Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which is next Wednesday 10 February. How time flies! It only seems like yesterday we broke up for the end of school (2015), and here we are not only back at school, but into Lent already and it is only week 2 of school year! Speaking of Lent, you will notice that I have changed the border for this column to purple, the liturgical colour for Lent. The previous two columns had a green border since we were in Ordinary Time.

Well, my first two columns focused on coffee and I will return to that theme next week, but for today I would like to introduce my topic of Lent, by briefly writing about one of my other pastimes- clothes shopping, or what I like to call 'wardrobe renewal'. Every year we all clean out our wardrobes and put aside the clothes we cannot or do not wish to wear anymore. In other words we are making room for new clothes and also in a certain sense trying to keep up with fashions. There is a parallel between Lent and our wardrobe renewal. I like the season of Lent, because it is a bit like the David Jones stocktake sale. Yes I do like to shop at David Jones. Remember I said in my first column a good liturgical musician has to be well dressed. Lent, is like a stocktake sale for us, because we look at how we can do things better in our lives and how can we improve our prayer life. We also examine ways in which we can give more to the poor and what can we fast ourselves from in order that others may have something more. If you do your wardrobe clean out during Lent, you are certainly fulfilling an aspect of almsgiving. Just as an aside, purchase an item of clothing with purple in it to wear to Mass during Lent.

I always like to sing the hymn *Ashes* (We rise again from ashes) on Ash Wednesday. It can also be sung for at least the first two Sundays of Lent as well. The full text of the hymn is in *Gather Australia*, which I know is out of print. You can also order a downloadable copy from Oregon Catholic Press (ocp.org). The text is so pertinent to Lent, and sums up the whole purpose of Lent. Give the hymn a go. You will indeed “rise again from ashes, and create yourselves anew.”

Enjoy your coffee! Try somewhere new this week.

Friday February 5, 2016