

## **Guess what's coming quickly?**

There are only a few weeks before we begin the season of Lent on February 10; less than a month away. As we prepare for this holy season, we are reminded that our life within a community of faith is a continuing call to repentance. For us this year it will be a time of challenge; the challenge of being able to understand more clearly our connectedness and our relationship to God, to the world (others) and to ourselves in a new way. We have been taught that sin separates us from God. Any one of us could make a list of all the behaviors, attitudes, choices and decisions that disconnect us from God, others and ourselves. This disconnect in our lives, this space, equals a "gap." Each gap is a place where we discover the tensions that exist in our relationships. But it is also in those gaps - those disconnected places in our lives - that we have the opportunity to encounter Jesus. It is in the gaps that we find our vulnerability, but also we find those moments in which we have the opportunity to define what we want to become; allowing each day to be a new beginning.

The tension that sometimes exists between our past and our present may never be removed – families will still have stress and strain in their relationships, gaps will still exist in the workplace, and there will, in all likelihood, be a continuing struggle for peace and justice in our world. But somewhere on the way between self-centeredness to self – giving, greed to generosity, anger to compassion, indifference to concern; lust to purity; prejudice to tolerance; estrangement to affection, the grace of God and the encounter with Jesus is possible. This encounter will enable us to discover a meeting place between God, others and ourselves – a meeting place in which we can be connected to our original calling as God's beloved sons and daughters. It is in those meeting places that we will have the opportunity to discover – respect and integrity, companionship and community, harmony and righteousness. Anywhere along the way we can rationalize our behaviors, choices and decisions and continue to escalate the tensions and anxieties in our relationship with God, self and others. We can move toward a way of living that will enable us to create healthy and sustaining relationships, empowering sincerity and integrity in our actions and in mutuality discovering an open pathway to discovering a connectedness that we were always meant to have as companions on a journey and as a community of faith.

In a few weeks you will be receiving in the mail some aids to assist you in your Lenten journey. I hope you will find them useful for you and those you love; wherever you are in your own personal journey. I encourage you to approach this season with openness to God's unconditional love and unbounded forgiveness in your lives and allow the Spirit of God to help you in recognizing the presence of God in your life and in the gaps. LGaetano