

Lent: 40 Days of Being Made Whole

Have you ever been asked “Have you been saved?” or “Do we need saved?” For me my natural response is: “Saved from what?” So in order to come to a better understanding of salvation, perhaps we could use another word. We can use the word fulfilled. We can use the word satisfied. We could use the word whole. Dutch theologian, Father Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. used the word “whole” or “whole-making” in order for us to grasp the Catholic- Christian meaning of the word Salvation. Salvation is whole-making.



This meaning has made sense to me because I see a broken world, so many broken people, broken families, and broken communities. This brokenness takes so many forms and has so many causes. The “things” that break people range from drugs, unemployment, spousal and child abuse, poverty and hunger, addictions, bullying, hate, anger, selfishness, exploitation of natural resources, the denial of life at so many moments. People are broken by a complex of networks that have been summarized as the seven deadly sins.

So how can we be made whole? We can try to do it ourselves; trying to find our fulfillment or satisfaction in “things”, “relationships”, “addictions” that appear to provide meaning for our lives.

But what happens when the music stops? We are left in the silence of our loneliness, desolation, hopelessness and at times desperation; seeking another “fix” to get us through another day.



Jesus understands our human situation. He was faced with the same choices and decisions in his life.

He was “like us in all things but sin.” He understood us, not from looking at us from the outside, but from the inside, in his own humanity. The temptation to seek an easy fix was not unknown to Jesus. Satan offered

him several escapes in the desert. Even at his crucifixion he was taunted to “come down off that cross” by his peers. But his ability to say “No” was his ability to say “Yes” to God – Abba his Father, remaining true to his original image and likeness as the beloved son.

Lent is about Salvation. Being saved from what? Being true to our original beginning in the heart of God – “I knew you before you were in the womb” – as the beloved of God. LGaetano

