

## Some Thoughts for February 2024

Marge Loenser

This year, 2024 is a leap year, and so this February has 29 days as compared to the three previous years in which February had 28. I looked up the explanation for leap year, but between reading all the details about the Gregorian calendar (which we now use) and the Julian calendar, (which we used to use) I got so confused that I decided not to talk about it. Math has never been my forte'. Just take my word for it--it's a leap year and we get an extra day!

Let's begin with February 2, which is the feast of the Presentation of our Lord. Simeon, being told by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he saw the messiah, meets Mary and Joseph in the temple and holds baby Jesus in his arms saying : "Lord let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled: my own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal You to the nations, and the glory of Your people, Israel..." He also spoke of a sword which would pierce the heart of our blessed Mother. Holy Mother, please pray for us.

Feb. 3rd is the feast of St. Blaize; this is the day we get our throats blessed. St. Blaize, please pray for all those with diseases of the throat.

On the 5th we celebrate St. Agatha of Sicily. She was martyred in 251 AD and is the patron saint of rape victims, breast cancer patients and wet nurses to name a few. St. Agatha please pray for us.

Ash Wednesday is on the 14th. It is also St. Valentine's Day which we celebrate with lots of romantic cards, and boxes of chocolates. In the third century there were three martyred priests with the name Valentine. One of them would marry young Roman soldiers that were forbidden to wed by emperor Claudius. He was imprisoned for this and when he healed a blind girl he was released and started to evangelize this pagan household. For this he was imprisoned again and in prison he exchanged letters with the young woman he had healed. His last letter to her before he was killed was signed: "From your Valentine." Thus began the tradition. St. Valentine please pray for an outpouring of love between all peoples.

I found a quote from Archbishop Fulton Sheen: "A divine trick has been played on the human heart as if a violin teacher gave his pupil an instrument with one string missing. God kept a part of man's heart in heaven, so that discontent would drive him back again to Him Who is Eternal Life, All Knowing Truth and the abiding Ecstasy of love."

God love you.

Marge Loenser



Marge Loenser is a member of Saint Mark's Church in Sea Girt where she is a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister. She has retired from teaching CCD at Saint Mark's. She has been a member of Catholic Women of Zion for about 30 years and is also a member of Mary Queen of Peace Prayer Community for about the same length of time. She writes for a monthly column for Saint Mark's Church Bulletin.