

Samaritan All

Deacon Gerry Palermo

Samaritan All - Outline

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Introduction

It is impossible to “boil the ocean”.

The ocean is a very big body of water. The possibility of reducing it and purifying it is, for a human, an impossible task. Yet, we do encounter it. In fact, 40% of the world’s population live near the oceans. From the ocean comes food, transportation, and moderation of climate. We need the oceans although we will never master it as if to boil the ocean.

Moral theology is an ocean. We cannot possibly boil it down. I can’t anyway, if you can – great! But I can encounter it. Let’s engage in mutual discovery of how we think. My hope is to force more questions than answers. This writing cannot be categorized as only moral theology discourse. But for the season of Lent, a journey through the perplexity and contradiction of the human heart.

Moral theology takes on a great amount of analysis concerning the nature of actions, motivations, consequences, and the order or disorder of the action.

A nice, short primer: <https://www.avemariapress.com/engagingfaith/morality-of-human-acts>.

Moral theology is however not as much as a self-help functional guide as it is a guide to the Confessor as to the spiritual guidance to be given in a particular circumstances. There are two extremes: laxity and scrupulosity. A good confessor helps a person navigate between the two and bring about a healthy conclusion in body, mind and spirit. In simple terms we call that a good confession.

All spiritual exercises are directed toward intimacy with God. Some are direct and some are indirect. We can categorize this paper as indirect. The “I to Thou” relationship that is the supreme of all essence of being has a certain component that must exist to work. There must be some sort of understanding of the “I”. When doing ministry in family dynamics I use this phrase, “**Without a ME there can’t be an US.**” Who is the ME of the I of the “I and Thou”? Yet, ***in face of the directness of the relation everything becomes irrelevant*** (See ***I and Thou*** By Martin Buber in the reference section). Thus we can say that the indirect method here has limited value and transitional use. But it is valuable and it is useful.

A Common Pledge

Ash Wednesday is a pivot moment in the liturgical calendar. It marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a recapitulation of the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert and he had to confront the perplexity and contradiction of the human heart. Not as an intellectual exercise or spiritual exercise divorced from the physical life but rather deeply imbedded into the physical life.

Ash Wednesday begins **A Common Pledge** of the faithful.

1. We wish to gain greater intimacy with God.
2. We wish to gain the greater intimacy with God as a community.
3. We pledge sincerity and avoid hypocrisy (“role playing as an actor in a play”).
4. We pledge to engage in deeper forms of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
5. We pledge courage to identify with the victim when it is so and identify with the perpetrator when appropriate. Sometimes we are both at the same time! Sometimes we cannot see because it is too painful. But together we can.

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Ash Wednesday Liturgy

In all three reading cycles we read from the gospel of Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18.

Jesus discusses the need for sincerity in regards to:

1. Almsgiving
2. Prayer
3. Fasting

Each of these are liturgical actions embedded in the physical life. Said another way, almsgiving, prayer and fasting are forms of worship of the Divine by way of the things we do for others and for the Lord, both.

A KEY part of the message of Jesus is **the meeting of the Other in the moment of the action**. The action, important of itself, but has a transcendent quality to it. To quote again: ***in face of the directness of the relation everything becomes irrelevant.***

Hunger (**Fasting**) – humans hunger not just for the body but also the soul yearns for the Lord. Relation, not object to satisfy. ***(Resp) One does not live by bread alone, but by every word the comes forth from the mouth of God*** (MT 4:4b).

Desire (**Prayer**) – Prayer for the good of the other. Prayer for the good of relation. ***Throw yourself down.*** ***(Resp) You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test*** (MT 4:5d, 7b). Relation, not object to satisfy.

Power (**Almsgiving**) – Giving for the good of the other. Giving for the good of relation. ***Worship me.*** ***(Resp) The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve*** (MT4:9, 10b). Relation, not object to satisfy.

Reflection

Almsgiving, prayer and fasting. The disciplines of Lent.

1. When you give alms, pray or fast what direct relation is involved?
2. How are you relating to the Lord? To the other of your intention?
3. Can you sense any connection?

Angels Ministered to Him

Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him (MT 4:11).

Try not to worry. Just try to be good.

Angels help us and minister to us as we struggle with our difficulties.

Action

Consider this ***integration of action***. When you fast, take the money not use to purchase meat and food you would have eaten and donate the money to feed the poor. Pray the Lord make this action beneficial to you the penitent and for the recipient a source of praise of God.

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Who is good

The Samaritan Question: Who is good?

The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (Lk 10:29-37).

Justifying Oneself

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (Lk 10:29).

It is an important question we must ask 'who is my neighbor' and yet it contains within itself a fault we wish to hide, 'I want to and I do exclude others'.

Jesus very lovingly explains to him that the example of the Samaritan, universally avoided by the Jewish people, has the capacity for good and has the calling to be good. Recall also that when Jesus left Judea and returned to Galilee, ***he had to pass through Samaria*** (Jn 4:4).

The story of the Good Samaritan occurs on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. This is not Samaria territory. It is a part of Judah with its heavy foreign influences. Even still, it isn't just that the Samaritan did good but he did good as a foreigner in the land of Judah. Going further into the topic, Jesus did not avoid the place of Samaria and the people who live there as he had to pass through Samaria and we see in the other gospel portions later.

Who is Good?

An official asked him this question, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone (Lk 18:18-19).

Who is good? (I am certain of two things: There is a God and I am not him).

Jesus is not disavowing his goodness as he cannot. He is the second person of the Blessed Trinity. His statement is meant to reveal at the foundation of it: All good comes from God because goodness is the nature of God. Yet man is good by degree. We know from Genesis.

Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness.

God created mankind in his image;

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in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.

God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good (Gen 1: 26a, 27, 31).

We are made in the image and called to the likeness of God.

How then can we know this 'being made'? How can we know 'neighbor'?

Fruits and Gifts

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, long-suffering, humility or gentleness, fidelity or faithfulness, modesty, continence or self-control and chastity.

Reflection

There is always a tension between doing good and appearing to do good. Early in Lent we confront the question every year, specifically. There is always a difference between actual good and simulation of good.

1. Do we see the good the Samaritans do in our midst? The good Samaritan did good not in his own place but in YOUR PLACE and IN PLACE OF YOU (think about that twist of wording).
2. Do we pass through Samaria, too? Who or what places do we avoid? Do we subscribe subhuman attributes to the people and places of the poor?
3. Do I wish to JUSTIFY MYSELF? This is a key question. Do I spend time justifying WHY I refuse to help him or her?

Rest in the Lord

On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing; he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation (Gn 2:2-3).

Try not to worry. Just try to be good.

Being good is baked into us.

Action

Consider this *integration of action*. A spiritual director I listen to once explain it this way:

Don't just do something, sit there!

A twist on the old "Don't just sit there, do something"! No, the spiritual director is right. We really need our rest. Rest in the body and rest in the Lord. Rest is Jesus. Spend quite time with him. He will bring you

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rest and direct you to right action which does not deplete and does not abuse but brings refreshment in spirit and body.

Brother's Keeper

The man had intercourse with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, saying, "I have produced a male child with the help of the LORD." Next she gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel became a herder of flocks, and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought an offering to the LORD from the fruit of the ground, while Abel, for his part, brought the fatty portion of the firstlings of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry and dejected. Then the LORD said to Cain: Why are you angry? Why are you dejected? If you act rightly, you will be accepted; but if not, sin lies in wait at the door: its urge is for you, yet you can rule over it. Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out in the field." When they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD asked Cain, Where is your brother Abel? He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" God then said: What have you done? Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! Now you are banned from the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the ground, it shall no longer give you its produce. You shall become a constant wanderer on the earth. Cain said to the LORD: "My punishment is too great to bear. Look, you have now banished me from the ground. I must avoid you and be a constant wanderer on the earth. Anyone may kill me at sight." Not so! the LORD said to him. If anyone kills Cain, Cain shall be avenged seven times. So the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one would kill him at sight. Cain then left the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden (Gen 4:1-16).

Am I my brother's keeper? (Genesis 4:9).

It's the question of Cain (Jewish Wisdom, Telushkin).

It's the question of the expert in the law of the Good Samaritan parable (Lk 10:29).

If you act rightly, you will be accepted; but if not, sin lies in wait at the door: its urge is for you, yet you can rule over it (Gen 4:7).

The reflection within the reflection:

1. Why are you angry?
2. Why are you dejected?

Or said another way, what disappointment in you causes you to lash out and want to oppress others?

It is not enough to say I don't lash out. It is not enough to say I don't personally oppress. Much time and effort in our current age has been dedicated to understanding our deepest motivations, biases which are often translated into the three A's I warn of frequently: **Alliance, Advantage and Acquisition**. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and its rejection is a horrifying example of a failure to rule over ourselves. A rejection of CRT is the rejection Cain makes of the Lord's wish for him. Note: yes, great care on when and how to discuss CRT is important. It isn't a dialog for everywhere and at all times.

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God then said: What have you done? Your brother's blood(s) cries out to me from the ground! (Gen 4:10).

So the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one would kill him at sight (Gen 4:15b).

The mark of Cain serves many purposes:

1. A distinction of not being God. A sinner, as us all.
2. A distinction of being loved by God.
3. A person protected by God despite the sin.

It is a very profoundly evil sin (ultimate of type and magnitude of instances):

1. It has an immediate effect.
2. It has a generational effect (*de-mei*, "Bloods").

Since our overall topic this Lent is the Samaritan we must then see this teaching of Cain in respect to our most heartfelt love, our own Church and her members. Hear the reported words of Pope John XXIII (1881-1963), Prayer of Repentance:

We realize now that many, many centuries of blindness have dimmed our eyes, so that we no longer see the beauty of Thy Chosen People and no longer recognize in their faces the features of our first-born brother. We realize our brows are branded with mark of Cain. Centuries long has Abel lain in blood and tears, because we have forgotten Thy love. Forgive us the curse which we unjustly laid on the name of the Jews. Forgive us, that with our curse, we crucify Thee a second time.

There is legitimate difficulty with both the authenticity of this prayer and the subtle bias contained within the prayer (sorry!). I provided a link to a very thoughtful analysis of the prayer:

<https://gerrypalermo.files.wordpress.com/2022/02/1580-article-text-1715-2-10-20110525.pdf>

Here is the deeper point.

We really don't see our own desire to lash out and oppress. We don't see our anger, sense of being dejected and our disappointments. But we have the 40 days of Lent to make a difference. We can master our passions. The Lord assured us of that in the Lord-Cain dialog.

Nostra Aetate, Vatican II document, takes us a step further but just a step. The story of Cain is an attempt to summarize our deep seated inability to see others as the other of ourselves.

We too must fold up our tents and continue the pilgrimage.

Reflection

Do we accept the Lord's questions?

1. What have we done?
2. Where is your brother?
3. Why is the blood crying out to the Lord?

Call Upon the Lord

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At that time people began to invoke the Lord by name (Gn 4:26b).

Try not to worry. Just try to be good.

The Lord wants us to invoke his name as we struggle with our difficulties.

Action

Consider this ***integration of action***. Invoke the name of the Lord for those you have never cared about before. Donate your alms to charitable relief for one of them. So many to pick from!

1. Missing American Indian women abducted and not found.
2. Ukrainians. Haiti. Libya. Syria. Somalia, Nigeria, and Ethiopia.

How Many Enemies Do I have?

If you like axioms then here is one for this writing:

We hate in others what we hate most about ourselves.

Note: I do not want you to misread the following list. This isn't about an error of the Jewish people. It is about our ability to make lists of enemies. Our CONSUMING DESIRE to list enemies. Sacred scripture, in a peaceful way, forces us to confront ourselves in the disgust we have for others.

1. Tyre (broke faith/treaty)
2. Edom (fought us with swords)
3. Syria (slaughtered Gilead)
4. Philistines (sold people into slavery for trivial debts)
5. Amorites (kill women)
6. Moabites (burned humans)
7. Ethiopians (look different than us)
8. So I have decided to lead you up out of your affliction in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex 3:17)

From the Prophet Amos (9:7):

***Are you not like the Ethiopians to me,
O Israelites?—oracle of the LORD—
Did I not bring the Israelites from the land of Egypt
as I brought the Philistines from Caphtor
and the Arameans* from Kir?***

And yet we understand it this way, from the New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE):

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The Ethiopians...the Philistines...the Arameans: although Israel's relationship to the Lord was special, even unique in some respects (3:2), Israel was not the only people on earth that God cared for. Striking here is the reference to divine intervention in the history of the Philistines and Arameans, not unlike the Lord's saving intervention to bring Israel out of Egypt. Caphtor: the island of Crete.

Here is the deeper point.

Our true enemy is:

1. **Gratification of Hatred** – the sickening gratification we get from revenge.
2. **Self-hate** found in the actions of others (*who suffer similarly*).
3. When they sow the wind, they will reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7). The trap of hatred.

Reflection

Romans chapter 12:9-21 gives us a wonderful prescription for what ails us.

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/romans/12?9>

Action

Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." Rather, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good (Rom 12:9-21).

Do so as a practice of Lent:

1. **Pray** about the enemy within ourselves we see in others.
2. **Almsgiving** to heap burning coals upon your head and their head.
3. **Fast** from misjudgment. Pray for right judgment.

The World's Hatred

The world wants us to be trapped in the three "A"'s: Alliance, advantage and acquisition.

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/15?18>

The world hates the Father. The world **REJECTS** anyone doing good like the Father and the Son. The world wants you to be trapped in a psychosis of alliance, advantage and acquisition.

Jesus rejected at Nazareth, <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/13?54>.

Jesus rejected by Samaritans, <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/9?51>.

The Samaritan Rejection and Non-retaliation - A Summary of the New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary, 43:120.

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/2kings/1?10>

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/2kings/1?12>

I am not going to dispute the literary versus literary use of Elijah's fire.

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I will note Jesus REJECTION of that type of fire.

Jesus is interested in restoration and the healing of enemies.

He desires a fire. A fire of the Holy Spirit for all.

Reflection

Since both Judean's living in Nazareth and Samaritans in Samaria both rejected Jesus we must imagine we have a tendency to do the same!

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/12?49>

"I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/acts/8?4>

Action

Opposites. Try to find the opposites.

	Lent Practice
Alliance	Let us not align against others. Let us be open to the voiced concerns. <i>Ask questions.</i>
Advantage	Let the Other have the advantage. <i>Love is the ultimate advantage.</i>
Acquisition	Let us share with those we tend to not want to share with. <i>Give it up!</i>

Parable on Love of One's Enemies

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/6?27>

How is it we have enemies? We aren't born that way?

It is faulty judgment that brings about hatred because it is faulty judgment that brings about poor actions that generates hatred and makes enemies.

Six Choices Jesus Asks Us to Consider

1. **Love** be not an enemy.
2. **Bless** be not cursed or be cursing.
3. **Pray** rather than strike.
4. **Give** rather than hoard.
5. **Do** rather than abase.
6. **Be** rather than judge.

Jesus' True Kindred, <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/12?46>.

Of Corporal Kindness

1. to feed the hungry,
2. to give drink to the thirsty,
3. to clothe the naked,
4. to give shelter to travelers,

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5. to visit the sick,
6. to visit the imprisoned,
7. and to bury the dead.

Of Spiritual Kindness

1. To instruct the ignorant.
2. To counsel the doubtful.
3. To admonish the sinners.
4. To bear patiently those who wrong us.
5. To forgive offenses.
6. To comfort the afflicted.
7. To pray for the living and the dead.

Reflection

Many of you do #1 and #3 too much or even sinfully, so skip those!

Action

- Pray for a proper version of spiritual instruction and admonitions.
- Almsgiving by donating to Immigration Relief or to Women in Crisis.
- Fast from your own comfort. Give comfort to others.

Cleansing of the Ten Lepers

Cleansing of the Ten Lepers, Lk 17:11-19.

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/17?11>

Samaritan Leper A Summary of the New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary, 43:153.

The Samaritan understood he received not just physical healing but the promise of salvation giving thanks to God. This event is the fulfillment of 2 Kgs 5:8-19a.

When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent word to the king: "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me and find out that there is a prophet in Israel." Naaman came with his horses and chariot and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean."

Verse 20 when Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, the man of God, thought to himself: "My master was too easy on this Aramean Naaman, not accepting what he brought. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something out of him. [He wanted something more than what the Lord wanted].

More rejections:

- Zerubbabel rejects Samaritan aid in restoring the temple (Ezra 4:1-5). Zerubbabel finds a reason, ANY REASON HE CAN, to reject Samaritan aid – he made an enemy. A Summary of the New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary, 75:118-119, 127, 140.

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- Due to mixed heredity and legal minutiae of the Law, Zerubbabel gives free reign stubbornness and racial prejudice. - A Summary of the New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary, 23:89.

Reflection

We really do tend to reject the blessings God gives to others as though God doesn't know what he is doing. Like He is an idiot and doesn't know better. Eek!

Action

- **Pray** blessings upon those who you don't like. SEE blessings the Lord deliberately gives them.
- **Fast** from discounting mercy for others than yourself.
- **Almsgiving** – attend the funeral of a hated one as an act of mercy.

The Discourse with the Woman of Samaria

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/4?4>

Extensive review: <https://gerrypalermo.files.wordpress.com/2019/08/gospel-of-john-outline-final.pdf>

Reflection

There are two different problems to overcome.

- How long will I hold to incomplete and/or false stories even when confronted with truth?
- How long will I hold a grudge?

Action

- **Pray** for the courage to give up the incomplete or the false.
- **Fast** from holding grudges.
- **Almsgiving** – gives what belongs to you but is contested ownership by another.

Lent Cycle C Weeks Two through Five

See outline: <https://gerrypalermo.files.wordpress.com/2022/02/three-year-cycle-five-week-lent.pdf>

Week Four, consider reading: The Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri J. M. Nouwen.

Week five, <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/8?1>

Reflection

The problem of the Return of the Prodigal Son and the Woman Caught in Adultery is IDENTICAL.

We wish to withhold the mercy of God from those we deem unworthy of mercy.

Action

- **Pray** for mercy for others especially those you don't like.
- **Fast** from not liking them. Jesus likes them.
- **Almsgiving** – gives the mercy you received to others.

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The Ancient Problem of Samaritans (Thoughts)

Integration and Disintegration

The people of have always encountered this problem. When is integrating the foreigner into the midst as family and equal a positive experience or a negative one? From the exile we can recall the passing references to the foreigners among us and the problems they bring with them.

Departure from Egypt

A crowd of mixed ancestry also went up with them, with livestock in great abundance, both flocks and herds (Ex 12:38).

They seem to be the complainers of the traveling group: The riffraff among them were so greedy for meat that even the Israelites lamented again, "If only we had meat for food! We remember the fish we used to eat without cost in Egypt, and the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now we are famished; we have nothing to look forward to but this manna." (NM 11:4-6).

Punishment of Blasphemy

A man born of an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father went out among the Israelites, and in the camp a fight broke out between the son of the Israelite woman and an Israelite man. The son of the Israelite woman uttered the LORD's name in a curse and blasphemed. So he was brought to Moses— now his mother's name was Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan— and he was kept in custody till a decision from the LORD should settle the case for them. The LORD then said to Moses: Take the blasphemer outside the camp, and when all who heard him have laid their hands on his head, let the whole community stone him. Tell the Israelites: Anyone who blasphemes God shall bear the penalty (Lev 24:10-15).

The problem must have been acute as the Lord had to regulate the treatment of them. You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien, for you were once aliens residing in the land of Egypt (Ex 22:20).

Source of Problem

Sargon's own annals (ANET 286) speak of his settling conquered Arab tribes in the territory of Samaria which we can cross reference to the bible including from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim (2 Kg 17:24). The division was so disruptive that the king of Assyria gave the order, "Send back some of the priests you deported, to go there and settle, to teach them the proper worship of the god of the land." (2 Kg 17:27).

The story of 1 Kings 13 (the chapter) is an example of the low expectations of the worship and peoples who reside in Bethel and worship at the temple there. I mention it here as it shows:

The continued division between the Judeans and of the remnant of Israel and foreigners.

1. The problem of syncretism (amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought).
2. Failure to respect the Levitical priesthood as such.

Samaritan All

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At the same time, they were venerating the LORD, appointing from their own number priests for the high places to officiate for them in the shrines on the high places. They were both venerating the LORD and serving their own gods. They followed the custom of the nations from among whom they had been deported. To this very day they continue to act according to their former customs, not venerating the LORD nor observing the statutes and regulations, the law and commandment, that the LORD enjoined on the descendants of Jacob, whom he had named Israel (2 Kg 17:32-34).

A Summary of the New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary, 10:63.

Disciplines of Lent

1. Fasting – one full meal with two smaller meals that together do not amount to a full meal.
2. Abstinence – refrain from eating meat. For this purpose fish is not a meat.
3. Exclusions to fasting – Those under the age of 16 and those over 59 years old.
More complete write-up: <https://www.thecatholicleague.com/refreshers-on-the-rules-of-fast-and-abstinence-during-lent/21603>
4. Stations of the Cross – attend one if you can.
5. Adoration and Benediction – attend one if you can.
6. Common Meal with the community – Fish Fry, anyone?
7. Sunday obligation (if you have been lax, good time to reassert your faith!).
8. Holy Week observances beginning with Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter vigil, and Easter Sunday.
A good week to take a VACATION WEEK from work.
At the least take off the Monday of Easter!
9. Reading scripture.
10. Confession/Reconciliation.
11. Retreat or Lent Conference (Day of Reflection or Day of Prayer).
12. Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving as an **integrated effort.**

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Bibliographic Resources

1. Saint Joseph's New American Bible including Introduction
2. Synopsis of the Four Gospels (RSV) American Bible Society
3. The Jewish Gospel of John By Dr. Eli Lizorkin-Eyzenberg
4. The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, Geoffrey Chapman
5. I and Thou By Martin Buber https://deacongerrypalermo.blog/buber-c1923-i_and_thou-ocr-tu/
6. Catechism of the Catholic Church
7. Compendium of the Catechism (easy to read) <https://store.usccb.org/products/compendium-of-the-catechism-of-the-catholic-church>
8. [Jewish Virtual Library Organization](#) – great resource for adding to your background.
9. US Council of Catholic Bishops web site: <http://usccb.org/>
10. The New Oxford Annotated Bible RSV (ecumenical Study Bible).
11. The Prophets by Abraham J. Heschel.
12. Jewish Wisdom by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin.
13. My Jewish Learning web site <https://www.myjewishlearning.com>
14. Nostra Aetate https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html
15. The “Johannine Prayer” that Never Really Was by Murray K. Watson <https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/scjr/article/download/1580/1432/>
16. The Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri J. M. Nouwen.

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2. <https://deacongerrypalermo.blog/2020/03/15/deeper-well/>
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