



St. Peter's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church

500 South Country Road • Bay Shore, New York 11706
631-665-0051 • www.stpetersbayshore.org

Lent 2010

He had fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward He was hungry. Mat 4:2

Dear Friends,

He had fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward He was hungry. Mat 4:2

I have a very hungry fellow I live with. Let's call him *Needy David*. The name suits him, because he is all needs and he is part of me.

Needy David needs praise. Can't ever get enough. *Needy David* loves stuff. Can't ever get enough of that, either. He doesn't have a big screen TV. But he knows life would be sublime if he did.

Needy David is a very keen observer. He can detect a speck in a neighbor's eye from a mile away. And that's a good trick, because he has to look round the beam in his own to do it.

Needy David is the Prayer of St. Francis writ backwards. He seeks to be consoled, not to console. He craves to be understood, not to understand.

And then there's the whole love thing. *Needy David* is voracious. He can't ever get enough. So he tries to fill the hole in his soul with stuff like pride and praise and all the petty triumphs of the day.

But what *Needy David* really needs right now is Lent. And so does the needy persona in all of us. Sometimes it's our depressed "poor little me", other times it's our proud "omnipotent I." Our needy selves take different forms at different times. But they all need Lent. And Lent is ready to deliver. It is our annual opportunity for attitude adjustment. It is our six-week journey home to the risen Christ. It helps us put aside our needy selves and make room for our happy, blessed selves.

Creation was made for our happiness. We are not to rejoice in the Lord just at Christmas and Easter, but always. Lent is our blessed passage to the saving grace of the resurrection. As we learned in our earliest Bible studies, the Hebrew word for joyful is translated in King James as *blessed*. So a blessed Lent is a happy Lent.

That's the way it works, if you work it. And this year at St. Peter's we'll be working hard to build a happy, blessed Lent. It starts with a smudge of ashes to remind us that our stay here is only a visit and that we are on our way home. It progresses through a five-week, soul-stirring program of liturgy and music, prayer and reflection, scripture and fellowship...all aimed at throwing out the needy stuff and making room for overflowing joy in Christ. [\(For Lenten and Pascal schedule please click on this link.\)](#)

One of the happiest and blessed people to ever walk the earth was Francis of Assisi. That's because he left the needy life behind to live totally in Christ. This Lent let's follow him. Let's leave the needy life behind. Let's come together to be instruments of peace, let's sow love and let's be born again to eternal life.

Yours in Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dennis T. Sillery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'y'.