



Metanoia

John Valk

Christians throughout the world have begun the season of Lent. Lent is that 40 day period between Ash Wednesday (Feb. 12th this year) and Easter Sunday (Mar. 30). The number forty is well known in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Noah and his family sailed in the Ark for forty days. The Hebrews wandered in the Sinai Desert for forty years. Jesus fasted in the desert forty days.

Lent is traditionally a period of fasting, penitence and renewal. These outward expressions and inward reflections pertain to matters crucial for the here and now, and the life to come. In this sense, Lent forces me to listen.

Lent forces me to listen to a life in danger. My life can easily reduce to a series of unconnected events. Daily routine sets in with little effort. I need to stop. I need to think about what I am doing, what I am about. How do I make sense of who I am? Why do I do what I do? Is there meaning? I need to listen.

I also need to look around. I see many faces — people scurrying about and around. I feel many forces pulling and

tugging. I feel the need to work hard, not to waste time. I feel the need to do well, to have a good income, to have things. I feel many enticing offers, promises. To whom or what should I listen? I am listening!

None of this is easy. What will really give me what I need? What will restore me to wholeness? What will give rest to a restless soul? That's a big question for me, a major concern in my journey. The answer, while easy to state, is not easy to grasp. It is difficult to incorporate it into my way of being, because I resist. I need to listen.

Listening does not come easy. I am bombarded by voices — subtle, seductive, screaming, annoying. A cacophony assaults my ears, too many are in my face. I need silence. I need to listen for silence.

Lent is listening for silence. Odd isn't it to listen for silence. An oxymoron? But the silence does speak. That too is odd.

Lent is about quiet reflection. It is taking forty days to listen to the silence, to think about who I am, what I am doing, from what do I derive meaning.

Lent: Listening for Silence

Lent is listening to God. It is listening to God speaking through the life and death of Jesus Christ. If I listen well enough, I can hear the question slowly rising. Is what Jesus endured, stood for, and accomplished significant? Does it impact the goals, aspirations, endeavours I set for myself? Does it make any difference?

When I listen, I need to block out all church institutional wrangling, prejudices, hurts, and frustrations. These only distract me. I think only about myself and the gospel message. I think only about what the gospels say about Jesus, and especially his last days on earth. And then the question strikes me hard. Does what Jesus did make any sense to me, and for me?

As I listen for the silence, the answer flows over me. The embrace is warm, and it gives me peace and rest. I am worthy. I am valued. I am loved. I am forgiven. I have new hope. Yes!

Maybe life is an unending series of accomplishments. Maybe life is really endless striving, getting, asserting, routine, the "bottom line," noise, stress. But then, maybe not. The silence tells me.

Amnesty International at UNB

Every day in our world, people go to prison simply for expressing their beliefs. Often they suffer torture or execution. There is little pretence of legality, and sometimes a person will just disappear, never to be seen again.

Witness Dita Sari, and Indonesian labour leader facing a possible death sentence for involvement in riots, despite being in prison when the riots occurred. Or Daw Aye Aye Win and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, sentenced to seven years of imprisonment for having in their possession tapes of a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate's pro-democratic speeches. These are not the only such stories.

And although these events often take place somewhere far removed from our lives as Canadians, in the present global economy we can no longer pretend separation from the outside world. We all share a direct responsibility to put an end to abuses of freedom—to see the world as a community of individuals, each deserving of certain intrinsic human rights, regardless of nation, race, or ideology.

It is the aim of Amnesty International to further such a vision. It is important

to realize that Amnesty International is a non-political organization, independent of all governments, political systems, etc. To maintain its impartiality and integrity, Amnesty International is funded mostly by small, individual donations, membership fees, and local fund-raising drives. There are strict screening procedures for donations. No government monies are accepted.

Amnesty International's primary concern is protecting the human rights of political prisoners as specified by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its mandate is to:

- seek the release of prisoners of conscience— people detained for their belief, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, who have not used or advocated violence.
- work for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial.
- oppose the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners without reservation.

involvement in violations of human rights through letter writing campaigns to responsible authorities, appealing for a prisoner's immediate and unconditional release. It attempts to raise the international profile of each case, getting publicity about each prisoner in the local press. If Amnesty International can contact the prisoner's family, relief parcels are sent and correspondence with the prisoner begins.

There are more than 700,000 members of Amnesty International, spread out over 160 countries and territories. Members come from all walks of life and reflect a wide variety of viewpoints. We have our own chapter at the University of New Brunswick, and are in need of volunteers and donations to help us continue in this important cause.

This Friday at 2:30 in Carleton 218 we will be meeting to discuss abuses of human rights, to sign letters of protest, and for further planning. You can contact us for further information at e-mail q8b9@unb.ca or phone Kouroush at 451-6407. Check out our home page at <http://www.unb.ca/web/clubs/unbai/>. It's under construction now and should be completed soon.

BLOOD & THUNDER

Letters to the Editor

Shutting out the white men

To the Editor:

Re: Gabrielle Slowey's Womynsay article. If Ms. Gabrielle thinks white guys at a conference are not listening to her and the other women, and if Ms. Gabrielle is tired of listening to white guys, then she is free to get together with women to talk and listen. And she should keep white guys from attending

his get-together.

That way, white guys will know that the presence of too many of them is not appreciated.

Nobody can do this for Ms. Gabrielle. She can take action for herself. She can stage her own conference. Get on with it or get over it.

Phillip Ventzek

Could the writers who submitted Forest Breeze and Womynsay this week please contact Mary at 453-4983. Thank you.



There will be an important meeting of The Brunswickan membership today at 12:30. All staff members are asked to attend.

For the month of march the UNB Student Union will be giving the "Student of the Month" a beautiful Alexander Keith's winter jacket. The jacket has a black exterior, and a soft green interior. So if you or some one you know has made a great contribution to university life...

APPLY NOW TO BE THE UNB SU STUDENT OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH.

See Jole Hellmeister in Room 119 for more details. E-Mail- suprez@unb.ca, or call her at 453-4955.

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WEDS., FEB. 26th @ 4:00pm ROOM 103, SUB

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Travel Service Centre

Student Employment
Retail Sales Associates
May 10 to September 5, 1997

Student applications are invited for the summer positions of Retail Sales Associate with the Woodstock Duty Free Shop Inc. We require goal oriented individuals who possess excellent communication, interpersonal and organizational skills. Applicants must have completed one year of post secondary education and be enrolled to continue their education. Only the most positive, pleasant and productive individuals need apply. The successful candidates will maintain a flexible schedule that will include shift work, weekends, evenings, holidays and overtime. Successful candidates will also have reliable transportation.

The Retail Sales Associates will combine their sales ability together with a motivation for achieving and an enthusiasm for success. The successful candidates will work well in a team environment while completing a variety of tasks that will include extensive training, retail sales, customer service, cash control, administrative and inventory functions. Experience in retail sales and with customer service and cash control is preferred. Second language skills and computer experience will be considered assets. Students with an exceptional attitude and high academic standing will receive favourable consideration.

The application deadline is Friday, February 28, 1997. Interested individuals, who have the right combination of education, experience and attitude are encouraged to apply. Application forms may be picked up at the Woodstock Duty Free Shop Inc. on Rte.95 at the Woodstock - Houlton border crossing. Applicants may submit their resumes, including references together with their transcripts and completed application form, to the Woodstock Duty Free Shop Inc. in person, fax to 506 328-8212, E-mail to dutyfree@nbnet.nb.ca or mail to P.O.Box 2140, Woodstock, New Brunswick, E0J 2B0. Interviews will be conducted during spring breaks. We will contact only those applicants selected for interviews.

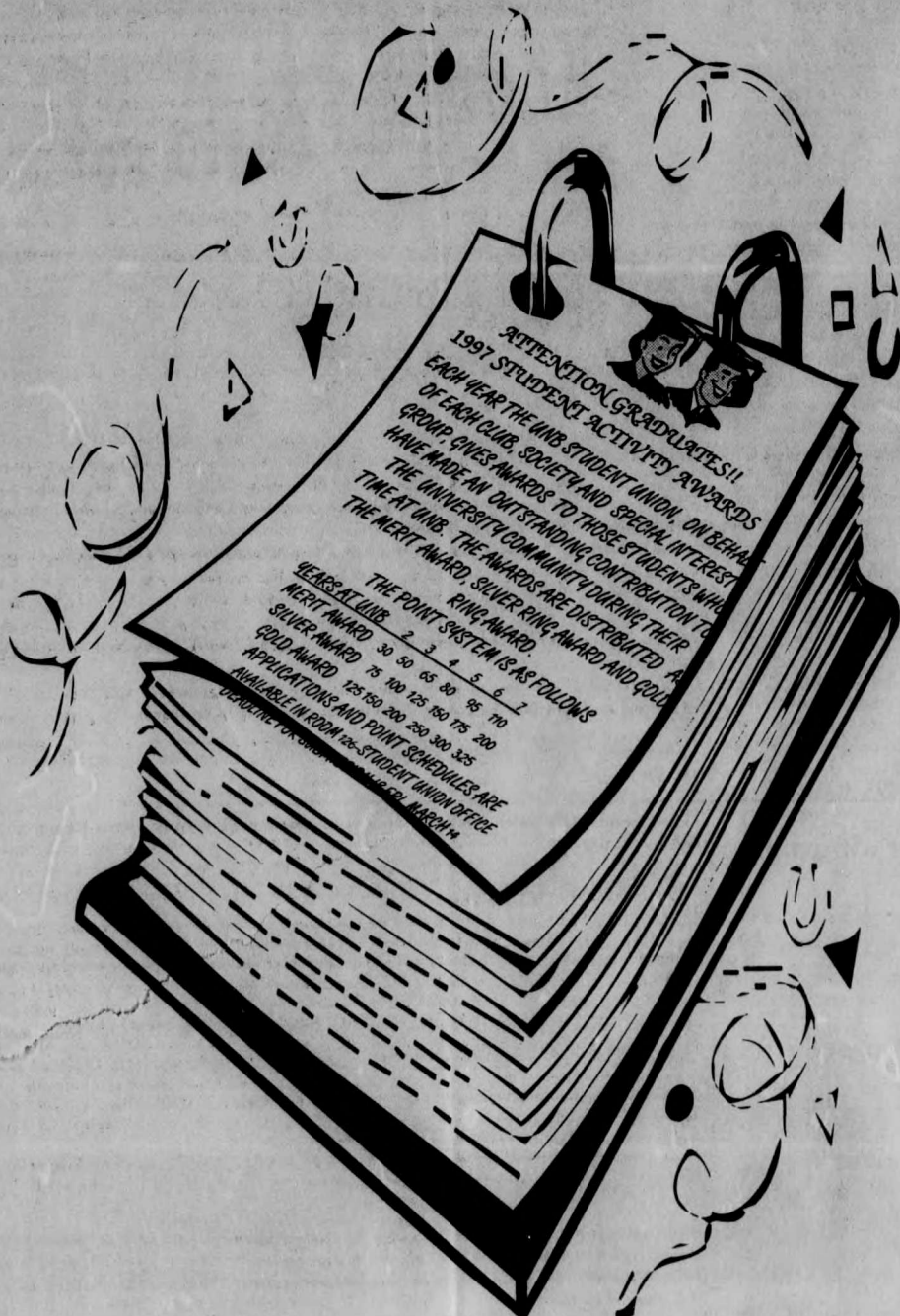


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