

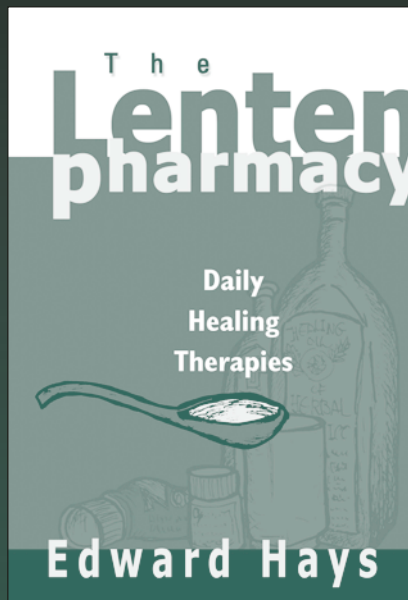
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FEBRUARY SELECTION

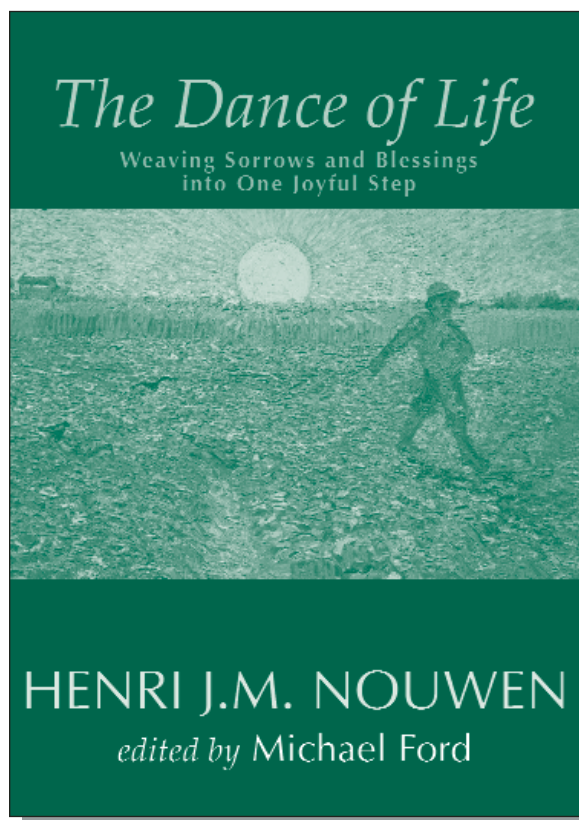


THE LENTEN PHARMACY

Daily Healing Therapies

Edward Hays
ISBN: 0-939516-77-2
128 pages / \$12.95

MARCH 2006 SELECTION



THE DANCE OF LIFE

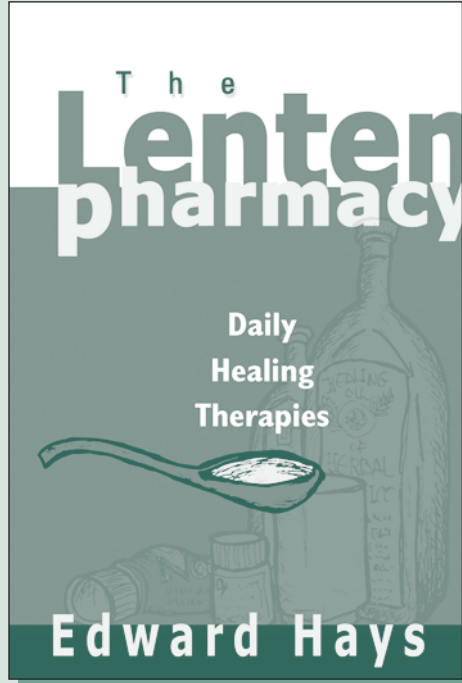
*Weaving Sorrows and Blessings
into One Joyful Step*

Henri J.M. Nouwen
Edited by Michael Andrew Ford

ISBN: 1-59471-087-2 / 224 pages / \$12.95



READER'S GROUP GUIDE



THE LENTEN PHARMACY

Daily Healing Therapies

Edward Hays

Those familiar with the works of Fr. Ed Hays will undoubtedly see classic elements of his imaginative brand of spirituality in *The Lenten Pharmacy*. Ed Hays takes us on a Lenten journey filled with “medicinal reflections” on the healer Jesus and prescriptions for what ails us all. Use this reader’s guide to enhance your journey. As always, you are encouraged to journal and to make connections with your own lived experience of God, with Scripture, and with the spirituality of those you know through books or personal acquaintance.

This Lenten book is ideal for private reflection or group use by a community or small faith sharing group. What follows is a week by week companion containing the daily Scripture readings and questions for journaling, reflection, or group use. Don’t forget to take the prescriptions given in the book! Questions in this reader’s guide though geared toward groups can generally be adapted for individual use.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EDWARD HAYS, a Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, is the co-founder and a moving spirit of Forest of Peace Publishing. He is the author of over thirty best-selling books on contemporary spirituality. Many bear his own art. He has also served as director of Shantivanam, a Midwest center for contemplative prayer, and as a chaplain of the state penitentiary in Lansing, Kansas. He has spent extended periods of pilgrimage in the Near East, the Holy Land, and India. He continues his ministry as a prolific writer and painter.

Elements of Ed Hays’ spirituality found in his books include:

- Spiritual discipline enriched by his God-given imagination
- Storytelling and parables
- An integrated, holistic view of spirituality which holds that God is truly everywhere in everything
- A sense of great discovery and pilgrimage
- Everything can be prayer, and prayer is also a function of environment
- God loves us in our brokenness
- Focus on the essential God-ness of creation
- Connection with a universal spiritual myth that speaks to us on a primal level

THIS WEEK IN YOUR VISIT TO THE LENTEN PHARMACY

The symbol of the Tau cross, which is introduced on “Ash Thursday,” can be used throughout your journey. Look for symbols and medicinal rituals to help on your healing journey. Contemplate the image of Jesus as healer.

WEEK OF ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday 3/1/06

Joel 2:12-18; Ps 51:3-6,12-14,17; 2 Cor 5: 20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6,16-18

Thursday 3/2/06

Dt 30:15-20; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 9:22-25

Friday 3/3/06

Is 58:1-9; Ps 51:3-6, 18-19; Mt 9:14-15

Saturday 3/4/06

Is 58:9-14; Ps 86:1-6; Lk 5:27-32

Symbols are important in our Church and in the spirituality of the author. This week gives us symbols with which to begin our journey—ashes connecting us to God’s creation and the Tau cross of living the Kingdom of God now. Prepare for your journey with these symbols. Discuss with your group or reflect on the role of symbols in your faith life.

Jesus transformed the Roman cross of

torture into the Tau cross of new life in the reign of God. Consider: What that is now negative and life draining do I want Jesus to transform into that which is life giving?

List ideas of what you can do on a restful Sabbath. Discuss the countercultural nature of such a practice, and develop a plan for beginning some sort of Sabbath vacation tomorrow.

READER'S GROUP GUIDE

1ST WEEK OF LENT

Sunday 3/5

Gn 9:8-15; Ps 25:4-9; 1Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

Monday 3/6

Lev 19:1-2, 11-18; Ps 19: 8-10,15; Mt 25:31-46

Tuesday 3/7

Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday 3/8

Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32

Thursday 3/9

Esther 12:14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7-8; Mt 7:7-12

Friday 3/10

Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26

Saturday 3/11

Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48

Conversion is a lifelong process of turning to God in order to be fully who we are meant to be. Hays asks us to list our pet self-set limitations. How do we identify these limitations? How can we turn “real” limitations into opportunities?

Do I take my own medicine, i.e., the advice I give

others, including my children?

Solitude is countercultural. How can I do this in my daily life? Can I carve out time for an extended retreat? On the other hand, what does or would my urbanized lay spirituality look like? Does this challenge my idea of the holy?

Try centering prayer in a quiet spot. During a normal day, try centrifugal prayer. Which did I find easier? Does regular practice of one type of prayer aide in doing the other?

Discuss the concepts of evil and sin, both personal and corporate. Relate how you strengthen your immune system against them.

How did I do last week in observing the Sabbath? Do I suffer from poverty of leisure? What will I do this Sabbath? If I must work this Sunday Sabbath, what day will I make my Sabbath?

2ND WEEK OF LENT

Sunday 3/12

Gn 22:1-2, 9, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 116:10, 15-19; Rom 8:31-34; Mk 9:2-10

Monday 3/13

Dn 9:4-10; Ps 79:8, 9, 11, 13; Lk 6:36-38

Tuesday 3/14

Is 1:10, 16-20; Ps 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23; Mt 23:1-12

Wednesday 3/15

Jer 18:18-20; Ps 31:5-6, 14, 15-16; Mt 20:17-28

Thursday 3/16

Jer 17:5-10; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 16:19-31

Friday 3/17

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-18; Ps 105:16-21; Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday 3/18

2 Sam 7:4-5, 12-14, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22; Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24 or Lk 2:41-51

We are encouraged to beautify from the inside out by being like Christ. As a group, discuss what thoughts, speech, and actions are Christ-like. Look to the gospels for stories of what Jesus did and said and how he did and said it. Did he engage in gossip? Was he always nice? What actions did he engage in regularly—healing the sick,

eating with friends, preaching, etc.? How can I be like Jesus in the world today?

So far we have listed pet faults, self-set limitations and pet virtues. Here Hays writes: “To be lovingly accepted by God doesn’t require removing a single fault, yet God’s love for us urges and enables their removal...freedom from sin is a fruit of faithful Christian discipleship, not its prerequisite.” How does this liberate me here and now? How does this challenge me?

What is my experience of the mind body connection? What thoughts do I tend to dwell on?

How can I cooperate with God in converting my pet faults into life giving, loving virtues?

Relate the challenge to give in Friday’s reflection to Sunday’s challenge to be Christ like. Consider revisiting this reflection and its challenges and questions during the Easter season to see if answers have changed.

What are my idols? What do I unknowingly or unthinkingly put ahead of God?

5TH WEEK OF LENT

Sun. 4/2

Jer 3:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-15; Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33

Mon. 4/3

Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; Ps 23:1-6; Jn 8:1-11

Tue. 4/4

Num 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-3, 16-21; Jn 8:21-30

Wed. 4/5

Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52-56; Jn 8:31-42

Thu. 4/6

Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-9; Jn 8:51-59

Fri. 4/7

Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-7; Jn 10:31-42

Sat. 4/8

Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10-13; Jn 11:45-47

“Keep in mind that your wounds and defects may very well be manifestations of the glory of God.” Is this difficult for me to accept?

How is overactivity a form of violence? How does it affect my relationship with God and others? How do I decide what to cut?

How do I deal with a pain in the neck? Consider how anger affects others around us, the one at whom the anger is directed, and others with whom we live or come in contact. Are there other casualties of this disease?

How do I nurture hope, humor, and a fantasy life? How am I using my God-given imagination?

In Friday’s reflection Hays gives us suggestions for dealing with a common crucifixion—gossip. Think about opportunities to crucify Christ that come about regularly. Brainstorm ideas to steal that nail.

READER'S GROUP GUIDE



3RD WEEK OF LENT

Sunday 3/19

Ex 20:1-17 or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17;
Ps 19:8-11; 1 Cor 1:22-25;
Jn 2:13-25

Monday 3/20

2 Kgs 5:1-15; Ps 42:2,3, 43:3-4;
Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday 3/21

Dn 3:25, 34-43; Ps 25:4-9;
Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday 3/22

Dt 4:1, 5-9; Ps 147:12-13, 15-6,
19-20; Mt 5:17-19

Thursday 3/23

Jer 7:23-28; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9;
Lk 11:14-23

Friday 3/24

Hos 14:2-10; Ps 81:6-11, 14, 17;
Mk 12:28-34

Saturday 3/25

Is 7:10-14; Ps 40:7-11; Heb
10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38

This week we consider authentic worship and the disease templeitis. Do I identify more with the Pharisees who put religious law above love of others or with Jesus who put love of others first? Am I apathetic in my worship or prayer?

Have I seen trespasses against me as an opportunity to practice the art of forgiveness

and in doing so to become godlike? How do I forgive? Do I get stuck on the first step?

If you are having trouble entering silent stillness, try first using a brief guided meditation to feel yourself filling with the Holy Spirit. Or, while deep breathing and purging, consider using a mantra. This could be what you long for, a loving word for God, or the Jesus prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”).

Jesus’ entire life was an act of worship. We are called to be as he was—how does that inform my idea and method of worship? Does mercy as a form of worship surprise me? How about play as worship?

Consider hospitality. How can I and groups to which I belong practice Christian hospitality? Brainstorm ways to reach out to the poor in mercy—volunteer at a local homeless shelter or Catholic Worker house of hospitality. Don’t just serve from a distance, though, but seek out experiences to be with the poor, suffering, and unwanted as a companion.

4TH WEEK OF LENT

Sun. 3/26

2 Chr 36:14-17, 19-23; Ps 137:1-6;
Eph 2:4-10; Jn 3:14-21

Mon. 3/27

Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13;
Jn 4:43-54

Tue. 3/28

Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9;
Jn 5:1-3, 5-16

Wed. 3/29

Is 49:8-15; Ps 145:8-9, 13-14,
17-18; Jn 5:17-30

Thu. 3/30

Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-13; Jn 5:
31-47

Fri. 3/31

Wis 2:1, 12-22; Ps 34:17-21, 23;
Jn 7:1-2, 10 25-30

Sat. 4/1

Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9-12;
Jn 7:40-53

This week we see the symbol of snakes. Look for them throughout the reflections and consider Ed Hays’ use of this symbol and how he uses disparate aspects, images and myths of serpents in the service of this holy journey.

Reflect long and hard on the questions the author poses in Tuesday’s reflection. Jesus is about

total healing—body and soul. These tough questions are a crucial step on your Lenten journey to healing, if you choose it. Do I really want to be healed?

Last week we dealt with pride, this week we consider self-loathing. Which is more of a problem for me? Which interferes more with my relationship with God and others?

Do I have any hidden prejudices? To whom am I called to show compassion? How do I go about doing that?

Consider revisiting Saturday’s reflection and any others that speak to you at times of your own personal lent—that time when you are ripe for finally shedding that which you need to shed. The liturgical calendar doesn’t always coincide with personal ripening and seasons, so, as with other medications you may take, use as necessary.

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday 4/9

Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11;
Mk 14:1-15: 47

Monday 4/10

Is 42:1-7; Ps 27:1-3, 13-14; Jn 12:1-11

Tuesday 4/11

Is 49:1-6; Ps 7:1-6, 15, 17; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday 4/12

Is 50:4-9; Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34; Mt
26:14-25

Holy Thursday 4/13

Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; Ps 116:12-13, 15-18; 1Cor
11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15

Good Friday 4/14

Is 52:13-53:12; Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25;
Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42

Holy Saturday 4/15

Gn 1:1-2:2; Ps 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35;

Gn 22:1-18; Ps 16:5, 8-11; Ex 14:15-15:1; Ex
15:1-6, 17-18; Is 54:5-14; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13;
Is 55:1-11; Is 12:2-6; Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ps
19:8-11; Ez 36:16-28; Ps 51:12-15, 18-19; Rom
6:3-11; Ps 118:1-2, 16, 17, 22-23; Mk 16:1-8

Easter Sunday 4/16

Acts 10:34, 37-43; Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23;
1 Cor 5:6-8; Jn 20:1-9

This week focus on God as your help. The last few weeks Hays encouraged deepening trust in God. Draw on that trust and focus on the healer’s help.

How can I continue this lifelong reformation and conversion? What spiritual medicines do I need in my medicine cabinet?

In Wednesday’s reflection, Hays writes “Any reformation of self without a passionate love for God and all creation

ultimately becomes destructive rather than life giving.” Am I motivated by guilt and shame or do I use those to motivate others to change? Is this healthy?

What do I do in memory of Jesus? Do I confine my understanding of his admonition to receiving Eucharist? Am I living the Eucharist in my daily life? How is Jesus’ way of non-violent love of friends and enemies related to the Eucharist?

Use an egg as a prayer icon, as Hays suggests. Do I find this life giving? With your group, discuss which symbols and rituals in this book have meaning for you.

How has this visit to the Lenten Pharmacy changed me?

ASH WEDNESDAY IS MARCH 1ST

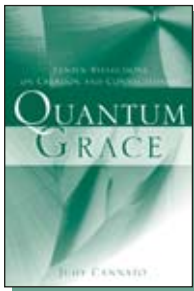
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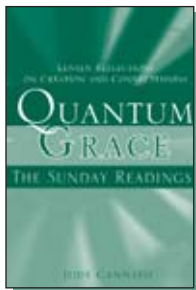
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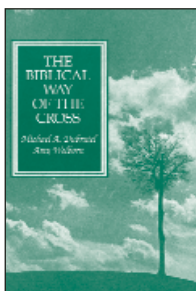
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Judy Cannato

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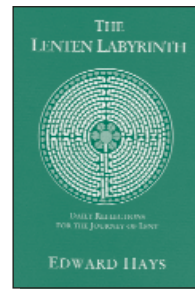


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