

"Trust your works
to the Lord, and your
plans will succeed."
— Proverbs 16:3

GRACE IN ACTION

LIVING CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP™



celebrate
March

- 1 First Sunday of Lent
Reminder: Abstain from meat during Lenten Fridays
- 19 St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 25 The Annunciation of the Lord

modern disciple

Stewardship: Strings attached



Denver restaurateur Noel Cunningham operates a happening, uptown, upscale Denver eatery known as Strings. He's a busy businessman, but not too busy to pull some strings for impoverished Africans. He and his wife, Tammy, founded the Cunningham Foundation, and upon entering Strings, one of the first

things every guest sees on a table out front is a collection of hand-made, heart-shaped, glass beads spelling out the word "HOPE." The Hope Bracelet Project is just one effort of the foundation, which also includes Quarters for Kids with the goal of feeding, clothing and educating 1,500 children in Ytebon, Ethiopia.



The Cunninghams with Gete Dessie (center). An Ethiopian, she's studying nursing in the United States.

Born in 1949, in Dublin, Ireland — an island that knew its share of tragic hunger — Cunningham credits his compassion to the example of his kindly mother and his Catholic sense of social justice: "I have an incredible sense of gratitude that I have a successful restaurant, so why wouldn't I try to help others? Once you visit a place like Ethiopia, how can you not help?"

Log on to cunninghamfoundation.org for more information.

the way we pray Our Lady of Knock

Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland, you gave hope to our people in a time of distress and comforted them in sorrow. You have inspired countless pilgrims to pray with confidence to your divine Son, remembering His promise: "Ask and you shall receive. Seek and you shall find."

Help me to remember that we are all pilgrims on the road to heaven. Fill me with love and concern for my brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who live with me. Comfort me when I am sick, lonely or depressed. Teach me how to take part evermore reverently in the holy Mass. Pray for me now, and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Visit www.graceinaction.org for an 11th-century Irish Litany of Mary.



"If I have any worth, it is to live my life for God."

— St. Patrick

James Baca photo



faithfact

St. Brigid's Cross

The legend of St. Brigid's Cross is that Brigid, renowned for her charity, once acted as nurse to a pagan chieftain. As he slept, she made a cross with some rushes from the floor. On waking, the chieftain asked why she had formed the cross, and Brigid told him the story of Christ and Cavalry. Deeply impressed, the chief's subsequent conversion, combined with a return to health, was attributed to Brigid's prayers.

In rural Ireland, a couple just taking possession of a farm or homestead traditionally nails a St. Brigid's Cross under the barn eaves. In some places, the St. Brigid Cross is placed in dwellings and on farm buildings on the eve of the feast of St. Brigid, Feb. 1.

Log on to www.graceinaction.org for a link to instructions for making a St. Brigid's cross.

Illustration by Quincy Benton



Steward the environment.

"Uncompahgre," by Ken Papaleo: www.highcountrycoloring.com

sowingseeds

Lenten blueprint for green living

"The environment is critically in need of stewardship attention."

— Stewardship: A Disciple's Response, U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship

In March, Irish or not, our thoughts tend to turn to the wearin' of the green. "Green," naturally, has taken on a new meaning. The challenge lies in making sure this environmental movement is more than a trend. In our society, we're making strides with recycling, water conservation, reduction of packaging, high-efficiency appliances, reusable shopping bags and the like. But we can't relax our efforts. Stewardship of our environment can dovetail with our Lenten practices.

PRAYER

Pray for leadership. Pray for scientists working on solutions. Pray that each person understands that his or her actions impact all of creation.

FASTING

Remember that abstaining from meat from time to time benefits the environment. Eating lower on the food chain translates to using fewer resources.

ALMSGIVING

Contribute to an organization working toward conservation, environmentalism or other branches of the green movement.

kidscorner

Find Irish saints

St. Patrick and St. Brigid weren't the only Irish saints. In fact, the tiny isle of Ireland is home to hundreds of canonized saints. See if you can find some of them in this word search. Word lovers of all ages will want to try their hand at this puzzle. Answers at www.graceinaction.org.

C A F I A C R E S D X A
 O O E V I N B C O C K N
 L M N M D C R S H O E D
 K U H A A A E A L L Y E
 O E C C N M N I U M I K
 L T V A Y R D F P O R T
 B R I E N O A H A Z E D
 O A L T I C N H M V A I
 B M E A V A S G G O O G
 T O M R E D S K C U M I
 A C L A K N A N I A H R
 R O N I D E C L A N W B

SAINTS TO FIND: Ana, Brendan, Brigid, Cass, Colm, Conan, Cormac, Declan, Dermot, Dymphna, Enda, Hugh, Kevin, Lucan, Mel, Tara.

trythis

Sharin' of the green

Giving circles are growing in popularity as a way to gather family and friends and advance charitable causes. Akin to investment clubs, giving circles consist of small groups meeting regularly to enjoy social contact and to pool resources. In the past four years, giving circles donated \$100 million to charitable organizations.

TRY THIS: Invite a group to a potluck to discuss forming a giving circle. Establish annual dues and meeting frequency. Agree upon a mission and which causes to support. See our link at graceinaction.org for more guidance on giving circles.

