

Transforming Myself This Lent

This Lenten season, I felt spurred to transform myself in order to transform the world. Change is an inexorable law of nature and my own journey unfurls my potential and reshapes the landscape of my life. This voyage of self-discovery where I confront my shadows, embrace my vulnerabilities and harness my strengths is surely going to be painful but growth demands courage and resilience.

A couple of days ago, Gerardette Philips RSCJ sent me an icon of “Our Lady of Silence”, commissioned by Capuchin Friar Emiliano Antenucci, written by the Benedictine nuns of Mater Ecclesiae in 2010, and gifted to Pope Francis in 2016. This was also the icon for the 2025-2026 probanists, who took their final vows last month. I found it very apt for Lent, as many, like me, are caught up with the world’s cacophony, social media and the like. Silence calms things and will help me see my true self better. The caption on the icon read, “Everyday place gently in my heart Your Son Jesus.” Immediately I decided to entrust my self-transformation to her, as she will help me recognize the voice of God.

Lent is a time to encounter, and encounters move us and transform us. It is an invitation to move beyond ego, embrace spiritual depth and step into a future where we belong to a thriving, interconnected world. It is also a time to embrace one’s pain, one’s history and grow in gratitude and joy, experiencing profound reconciliation by allowing one’s creativity to flow, thus deepening one’s life and maturing one’s faith. Confident that I can rise, recreate myself, make conscious decisions and create new habits, I have dared to choose self-transformation and conversion this Lent; as small intentions, tended with care, can grow into meaningful change.

I will begin by asking for the grace to make my heart find the right pace, real flexibility, strength to adapt, courage to change and to transfigure what can be changed this Lent.

I want to recognize my own prejudices and stereotypes, heal my past wounds and discover the blessings of God.

Accept uncertainty and tensions caused by divergences and convergences, in order to let life emerge in all its newness this Easter.

Embrace my differences, my wounds, my personal and shared vulnerabilities, so that I may be healed and become more alive.

Knowing that the energy I feed into myself, is what I will become, I want to replace complaining, sadness, laziness, selfishness, hatred, regret, ego, greed, anger and violence with creativity, honesty, motivation, confidence, forgiveness, peace, happiness, inspiration and bravery.

Aware that people around me have great impact on me, I will strive to be in the company of people with a positive outlook, who show others the light and have a desire

to make a difference.

As an earthling passionate about environmental stewardship and the planet's survival, I will continue with greater enthusiasm recycling, composting etc., turning waste into grace and will use fewer and less natural resources

As a double cancer survivor and in order to keep my immunity high, I will make sure that I get my dopamine which is the reward chemical by being creative, achieving the goals I set, completing tasks or doing a self-care activity. Oxytocin, the love hormone will be maintained by socialising, hugging family members, friends or by helping others. Serotonin, the mood stabiliser, will be gotten by getting out into the sunlight, practicing mindfulness, Vipassana meditation and enjoying nature. For endorphins or painkillers, I will smile and laugh a lot, exercise daily, listen to music, and watch a movie occasionally.

Ash Wednesday reminds us that we all return to dust. But we also contain a spark. This spark within me and in all life is what I want to explore and celebrate this Lent in all I do, think and say. This will be my prayer all through Lent. May this holy season of Lent be a grace-filled time for all of us.

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