



The LM Hymnal 2017

These Lent Madness hymns started out as a one-time response on the first day of the 2017 frivolity. As I read the comments, it seemed that many people were voting for St. Stephen over St. Alban because Steve had a good hymn. That didn't seem fair, so I wrote one for Alban to the same tune. It was fun, and someone posted a brief compliment, which was all the encouragement I needed to write one the next day for my favored saint, Henry Beard Delaney (and his wife, Nanny, who should be named a saint in her own right!) It kind of went from there, with verses honoring both saints each day. I later went back and wrote one each for Stephen and for Aelred, opponents of Stephen and Henry, because that seemed fair, too.

There is just something incredible about spending time with the amazing stories of these servants of God, and reflecting on the ways that God has worked through them, that makes me want to do my part in sharing their gifts with others. Some have asked how I do it. I have no idea. I am grateful to the website Rhymezone.com which has been my source for words that fit both meter and the meaning. I am grateful also to the composers of the hymn-tunes I've so shamelessly usurped. In the interests of full disclosure, I've done some picky editing of some of these lyrics since posting. Wordsmiths are rarely satisfied.

To the Supreme Executive Committee, to the awesome Celebrity Bloggers, to the faithful Bracket Czar, and to the many who not only voted, but engaged in conversation, both humorous and serious, I am enormously grateful. You have enriched me considerably this Lent. To God who loves us, who shows us through the gloriously imperfect lives of other saints that we all have value in our own imperfections, who came to live, teach, proclaim, love, suffer and die among and for us, and who rose and loves among us still . . . here words fail and a full heart can only sing wordlessly.

The Rev. Sister Diana Doncaster, C.T.

Shameless promotion: Please get to know the Community of the Transfiguration, an Episcopal religious order for women in Cincinnati, Ohio. Our website is **ctsisters.org**. Come and visit, on line or in person. (495 Albion Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45246) We would love to get to know you, to pray and worship with you, to offer you retreat/quiet time, to discuss favorite Saints and Celebrity Bloggers and how to get Scott and Tim to stop fighting.

Hymns for Lent Madness 2017

The Round of 32

As many Stephen voters proclaimed that they voted because S had a good hymn, here is one to the same tune for Alban.

For St. Alban

Tune: *Tempus adest floridum*, Good King Wenceslaus

Good Saint Alban hid a priest
When the soldiers sought him.
Learned of Christ, received the Truth
And would not deny him.
Death could not turn him away
From the Lord who loved him.
Parted waters on the way
To his execu-oo-tion.

Many stories now are told
Of this faithful martyr.
How his rolling head did cause
Up to spring fresh water.
Other tales are just too gross
For this simple song and
So I plead that you will vote
For our good Saint A – al – ban!

However, since Stephen only gets mentioned in passing in that popular song, it's only fair he gets his own.

For St. Stephen

Tune: *Tempus adest floridum*, Good King Wenceslaus

Stephen went out one fine day
To preach him a sermon.
Told the story of the faith
Scolded with great fervor
Those who claimed their righteousness
Stephen said contrary.
Ticked them off in many ways
Made them mighty angry.

(extra verse just for fun)

We all know what happened next,
It was mighty ugly.
Saul stood by their vestments fine,
Watching rocks fly smugly.
Stephen then beheld the Lord;
Prayed all'd be forgiven.
Offer up his soul in peace;
Joined the saints in heaven.

What were they supposed to do
With this pushy deacon?
OK if he fed the poor,
But not say his reasons.
Here's the trouble, deacons all,
If you try to challenge
Those who like things as they are
You'll find you're a problem.

For Henry Beard Delaney (and his wife, Nanny)

Tune: New Britain, Hymnal '82, 671,
Amazing Grace

Confronting evil, arrogance
And false self-righteousness;
The Grace of God called forth a saint
Who served amidst the mess.

A former slave of "Christian" folk
He studied, learned and taught.
He built and loved and still endured
The fears racism wrought.

(It seems a shame his wife is not
A choice that we can make.
She raised 10 children, worked and taught,
She too, is quite a saint.)

So vote for this strong faithful man
But don't forget his wife!
They've earned our honor and respect
And Golden Halos bright.

For Aelred

(Same tune. What else?)

We hymn the name of Aelred, saint
A man of wisdom true.
With gifts galore, and tactful soul
A leader from God's store.

Raised in a royal court, yet knew
He longed for better ways.
His life he would devote henceforth
To prayers and hymns of praise.

A quiet life was not allowed
To one with Aelred's skills.
A diplomat, a leader born
He rarely could be still.

Give thanks to God for Aelred, saint
Who sacrificed desire
For peaceful life in cloistered home.
For peace, served all his life.

For Isaac the Syrian and Mechtild of Magdeburg

Tune: *Grand Isle*, Hymnal '82, 293, I sing a song of the saints of God

We sing a song of two faithful saints,
Mechtild and Isaac, too.
Their mystic insights bless us still!
Between them who can choose?
And one was a Syrian whose land is now torn
And one was a woman whom men dared scorn
And their love and their faithfulness call us today
To seek God in silence too.

To choose one of them is mighty tough;
It's cruel of the SEC!
Was Isaac right to leave his call
And live in hermitry?
Or was Mechtild's the way; for she faithfully stayed
In the midst of the challenge of people each day?
And to choose between them is hard to do!
And I want to vote twice too!

For John Wycliffe and Moses the Black

Tune: Hankey, I love to tell the story.

http://library.timelesstruths.org/music/I_Love_to_Tell_the_Story/

I love to tell the stories of saintly folks below'd
Like holy scholar Wycliffe,
who knew the Church had erred.
He saw that wealth and power
And mind control were wrong.
Translated holy scripture
And fought his whole life long.

I love to tell the stories
Of folks beloved in Glory
Whose lives reveal some more of
God's Holy Triune Love.

I love to tell the stories of folks who got it wrong.
They then discovered Jesus
And sang a whole new song.
St. Moses was a bandit
But Jesus showed the way.
Peacemaking then his watchword
Until his dying day.

I love to tell the stories
Of folks beloved in Glory
Whose lives reveal some more of
God's Holy Triune Love.

How can we chose a saint today between these two strong men?
One fought with wit and wisdom
Against a church gone wrong.
One fought against the violence
Within his heart and soul.
And gave his life for loving
The Truth he'd come to know.

I love to tell the stories
Of folks beloved in Glory
Whose lives reveal some more of
God's Holy Triune Love.

For Henry Budd (Sakachuwescam - Going-Up-The-Hill) and Cecelia of Rome

Tune: *Wir pflugen*, Hymnal '82, 291, We plow the fields and scatter

They plowed the fields of mission
Where Christ led through the wilds.
Where people liked how things had been
Responses were not mild.
They coped with great injustice
In very different ways.
Persisted in their service
No matter who they riled.

All good saints around us
Find ways to share Christ's love.
So thank our God, O thank our God
They speak the truth thereof.

His name was taken from him
A name that tells his tale.
He heard the love of Jesus
And climbed the mount of faith.
He served his people always
With passion, wisdom too.
His priestly heart was open
To share Christ's loving truth.

All good saints around us
Find ways to share Christ's love.
So thank our God, O thank our God
They speak the truth thereof.

Cecelia heard the angels
And she would not deny
She had a higher calling
And that she would obey.
She prayed with heartfelt passion
(Was spared the other kind.)
Converted, taught and nurtured
Was killed but still she shines.

All good saints around us
Find ways to share Christ's love.
So thank our God, O thank our God
They speak the truth thereof.

For Anselm of Canterbury and Florence Nightingale

Tune: Woodlands – Hymnal '82, 438 or Birmingham – Hymnal '82 437 Tell out my soul

Tell out our souls, the wonders of God's saints.
Make known their deeds and their humanity.
Their lives proclaim a call to love and serve;
Through words and deeds that make our hearts rejoice.

Anselm was kind to those within his care.
Not fond of royal powers he'd not be swayed.
His thoughts of God were logical but stern.
Yet he proclaimed, through Christ our debt is paid.

Seeing great need, not wealth or social norms
Could keep this woman from her holy call.
Dirtied her hands in blood and muck and filth;
Saved lives, gave hope, she surely gave her all.

For Odo of Cluny and Theodore the Studite

Tune: *Ratisbon* – Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies, Hymnal '82, 7.
(or you can use the Hymn 6, different tune, same hymn)

Who can choose between these two
Faithful monks whose serving ways
Honored Christ in choices made,
In community that shapes
Human hearts to care and give?
May our service be so wise!

Odo's story might seem strange.
Called through anguished headache he
Honored what his father vowed,
Took it on with vigor strong.
Said no to the easy way!
Faithful reform; serve and pray!

Theodore deserves our thanks.
For his fights 'gainst powers that were.
For his poetry sublime.
For his love for icons fine.
For his leadership so brave.
For his defense of the slave.

For Raymond Nonnatus and John of Nepomuk

Dunedin, Hymnal '82, 31 and 455,

Most Holy God, the Lord of Heaven, and O Love of God, how strong and true.

Two saints who gave their lives away;
A choice we'd never wish to make,
Refused from higher road to stray
Thus honored Christ for Love's own sake.

Ray's life was giv'n to freeing slaves,
When all else failed, himself he gave.
He suffered greatly e're he died
His body e'en then others claimed.

John would not break the sacred seal.
He kept true faith with those he served.
He chose to die as one baptized,
In waters deep; he never swerved.

For Augustine of Hippo and Augustine of Canterbury

St. Flavian, Hymnal '82, 142 (Lord, who throughout these 40 days)

Two saints who share a common name
And share our common faith;
And though they're wildly different folk
They help us still today.

The one from Hippo's name looms huge,
(His hometown's name is apt!)
Defined so much that still is taught
He was one clever chap.

He spoke his truth, confessed his faults,
And tried to hide and pray.
Duty called and he obeyed
The rest is history.

A faithful monk was sent to lead
And serve where pagans reigned.
Where Christ was barely known or served
His fears he had to tame.

He worked with gentleness so wise,
With love and courtesy.
His kindness and compassion is
The wisdom that we need.

One note I'd add to SEC;
You've dealt us a tough blow!
To choose between such worthy saints
Is trying, don't you know?

For Martin Luther and David Pendleton Oakerhater aka Making Medicine

Hymnal '82, 493 *Azmon*, O For a Thousand Tongues

Two saints have we from different times
Who served without surcease.
One sought reform with vigor strong
One led the way to peace.

It was a dark and stormy night
When Martin Luther found
That being scared to faithfulness
Could with God's grace resound.

"Reform!" he pleaded oft to Rome,
But power would not heed.
At risk of life he stood his ground
To reform he would lead.

Courage and strength were not enough
To save the great Cheyenne.
But through imprisonment and loss
He learned with Christ to stand.

The medicine he learned to make
Brought hope in sad defeat.
He led his people, not to war
But to the Prince of Peace

Glory to God for saints like these
Who bore the tempest blast;
And found their way through loss and pain
To Christ the first and last.

For Franz Jägerstätter and Joan of Arc

Tune: *Paderborn* Hymnal '82, Ye Servants of God

God's saints who have led in quite different paths
Still show us two ways to face evil's wrath.
One heard that her call was to take up the sword.
The other resisted through pow'r of the Word.

Joan went to the king, spoke truth she had heard.
Victorious in war, then sold to the foe.
Was faithful in trials, in imprisonment too
Endured fiery murder for wearing men's clothes.

Rejecting advice to just go along
Franz chose the hard way; resisting the wrong.
His life was a prayer and a strong witness to
Discipleship's way up to death and on through.

How can we discern which saint shows the way
In our times of need when much is awry?
To lead in the battle, or stand quietly –
God give us the wisdom to not go astray!

For Amelia Bloomer and Philipp Melancthon

Tune: *Moscow*, Hymnal '82, 365 Come Thou Almighty King

'Tis joy to sing your praise,
God of amazing grace!
For countless ways,
You set your people free
To live more joyously.
And thanks especially
For many saints.

Amelia was no fool!
She saw beyond the rules
Of gender wrong!
Writing and speaking she
Worked for equality.
Through prayer and constancy
Sang your true song.

Philipp's strong, faithful mind
Sought truth the wise can find.
With Luther he
Tried through theology
To seek full verity;
Tried with humility
To keep your peace.

For all your saints through time,
Through whom your glories chime,
Our thanks are owed.
And for Lent Madness we
Give thanks and sing "WHOOPEEE!"
It's sure our cup of tea
This season long.

For Scholastica and Macrina the Younger

Tune: *Nun danket alle Gott*, Hymnal '82, 397, Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God
For women of devotion.
For two whose lives were giv'n
So fully to the notion
That love trumps all that tries
To take away the joy
Of serving, kindness, prayer
Lived fully in each day.

Scholastica was not
A woman to be gainsaid.
To speak of holy things
Was joy that kept her heart fed.
Her brother stuck to rules,
But she was free to pray.
God gave her what she asked,
Their joy her heart allayed.

Macrina, she survived
A bunch of strong-willed siblings.
A saint among those saints,
She comforted and calmed them.
Through grief she found her way
To live a holy life.
Her simple, austere style
Can teach us still today.

Dear God how can we choose
Between such awesome women?
Their strength and constancy
Has us a challenge given.
So thanks we offer you
For strong, wise saints like these.
They show us that your way
Is what our world still needs.

For Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky and Nikolaus von Zinzendorf

Tune: *St. Thomas (Williams)* Hymnal '82, 524 I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord.

All praise and thanks to God
Who hast done all things well;
Like giving us two awesome saints
Whose names we cannot spell.

A faithful Jewish man;
a linguist, scholar too,
Through scripture Sam found Jesus Christ
And pledged his life thereto.

A priest; he eastward went*
to China, gave his all,
as priest and bishop; translator –
it was his final call

There was a rich young man.
Who could have power too.
But Nick's true heart was turned to Christ
To love his whole life through.

We need community.
We need to sing and praise.
Nick's wisdom and his hymnody
Encouraged life in grace.

Again how can we choose,
Between amazing saints?
Whose lives give us examples of
God's oft amazing grace.

*It was graciously pointed out by a geographically literate Lent Madness participant that Schereschewsky actually had to go west to get to China, but since our culture tends to think of it as east, I will both humbly apologize to geographers and cartographers and stick to my culturally myopic original wording. Such stubbornness is probably not good for my soul, but God isn't finished with me yet.

For Elizabeth Ann Seton and Sarah

Tune: *Eventide*, Hymnal '82, 662, Abide With Me

Abide with them, O Lord, the SEC!
They'll need protection if they constantly
Bring to our days excess diversity!
On just one ballot, it's a choice thorny!

She is a sign of grace in midst of woe,
Elizabeth knew sorrow, loss and foes*.
Gave of herself wherever there was need,
Gave women purpose, bravely took the lead.

Sarah was strong, a model women need.
Learned the hard way that God is truth indeed.
Endured long years of empty womb and arms,**
Freed from sore bitterness to joy affirmed.

*There was tremendous prejudice against Roman Catholicism at the time, as well as against the religious life which was seen as "unnatural".

**I often wonder how she felt when she had to lie about being married, was taken into a harem (twice!) to protect her husband's hide then booted out to protect the king's/pharaoh's hide. She had so little opportunity for joy in her life, this matriarch of three faiths.

P.S. Verse 1 should not be read as a threat against the hallowed SEC. I have too much respect for such venerable and holy people to dare such a thing. I merely wish on them the occasional sleepless night that they inflict on us as we toss and turn, wondering if we made the right decision each day.

For Fanny Crosby and George Frideric Handel

Tune: *Engelberg*, Hymnal '82, When in our Music God is Glorified

In music from the heart we glorify
The God of heaven and earth who is our Light.
For Fanny and for George we'd like to sing
The A-word – but it's Lent!

Aunt Fanny knew her call was writing hymns.
Her heart was open though her eyes were dim.
And with our thankful prayers we'd still proclaim
The A-word – but it's Lent!

His father thought his music was a waste.
But God had given him a holy gift.
His music raises hearts and we would sing
The A-word – but it's Lent!

To God who sang all that exists to life.
To Jesus whose song led to sacrifice.
And to the Spirit Wind of life we'd sing
The A-word – but it's Lent!

The Sainly Sixteen

For Stephen and Henry Budd

Tune: *Land of Rest*, Hymnal '82, 304, I Come With Joy to Meet my Lord

They sought their Lord with joy and faith
In good times and in tough.
Of praising God, of speaking truth,
They could not have enough.

Of Henry we can't say too much;
He worked with those he served.
He'd no illusions, yet he prayed
And gave without reserve.

Of Stephen, Deacon, we must say
He gave all that he had.
His sermon blunt annoyed some folk.
Though stoned he still forgave.

It's kind of tough to make a choice
Between such paragons.
Their contrasts show God's gracious love
Around this diverse world.

For Florence Nightingale and Henry Beard Delaney (and his wife, Nanny)

Tune: *Donne*, Hymnal '82, 140, Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun

Wilt thou help us to stand against that sin
Debasing those of other gender, race?
Wilt thou show us where we, too, do not see;
Where we, too, sin and judge another's case?
For this wise nurse, and bishop too, we give thee thanks.

Still she persisted in her care for those
who suffered through the evil done in war.
Stood up to church, to generals, family,
Because she knew her holy calling to
Care for the sick, the injured ones, science and art.

Raised in the evil that is slavery;
Rejected hate when finally set free.
Used all his gifts to learn and grow and teach
To give to others what he had received.
Priest, bishop too, he served and loved, so tenderly.

We have a sin we'd rather not admit.
For even now we judge, reject and scorn
Those who diverge from us, whom we decide
Are worthy less of your love and our own.
Forgive us please, help us to see their dignity.

For Odo of Cluny and Mechtild of Magdeburg

Tune: *Leoni*, Hymnal '82, 372, Praise to the Living God

Two saints of great renown
Who sought to do God's will
Took different roads to sanctity
As all saints will.
One worked hard for reform
For Benedict's true way.
One stepped outside of rigid norms
To live God's praise.

A true monastic star,
His trek to holiness
Was convoluted 'cause his dad
Failed his promise.
A man of strict precepts
This Odo held the line.
No shifting of the Rule's true shape
He thought was fine.

Mechtild knew from her youth
That God was her true love.
Through Flowing Light of Godhead Bright:
She lived and wrote.
As Beguine cared for those
The world had left behind.
Reviled for life beyond strict rule;
Her light still shines.

For Odo and Mechtild
We offer up our praise.
Two saints of mindset quite diverse
To choose today.
'Twas by the Grace of God
they lived and served, and they
still speak to us of faithfulness;
of holy ways.

Hymn for Moses the Black and Raymond Nonnatus

Tune: *Old 124th*, Hymnal '82, 404, We will extol you, ever blessed Lord

We will extol you, ever blessed Lord
For your amazing saints be e're adored.
Moses and Raymond each found ways to be
Servants to others, servants thus to thee.
Led by your Spirit; so also may we.

Moses could fight and rob with great aplomb;
But found his truest battle was within.
Through prayer and meditation he was formed
To lead in peace; hospitable and kind.
And from all judgment; others he'd unbind.

Raymond the ransomer was brave and true.
Ran out of money, gave himself anew.
Converted many through fine preaching so
His lips were padlocked; yet love still shone through.
Thus may all preachers excess words eschew.

Two saints renowned each came through heavy strife.
We can learn from them gracious, loving life.
Through grace can learn to conquer inward fights;
Through grace can give ourselves, be gentle lights.
Whom shall we vote for, for the halo bright?

Hymn for Augustine of Canterbury and Scholastica

Tune: *Hymn to Joy*, Hymnal '82, 376, Joyful, joyful we adore thee

God of grace 'tis joy to praise you
For the endless grace you show'r
On your children for your love is
All we need in every hour.
For Augustine you were present,
Gave him courage, gave him strength.
To Scholastica gave knowledge
That your care meets ev'ry need.

Though his fear made him uncertain
You gave courage to obey.
Augustine spoke to the English
Helped them see your gracious way.
In your mercy hearts were opened,
Pagans found the joy of Christ!
E'en though Celtic church was broken
You've restored their wisdom life.

For the wisdom of a woman
Who knew love must trump the rule
Written by a man whose virtue
Blinded him to kindness' jewel.
For Scholastica we praise you,
For her faith, her constancy.
For the gracious gift you gave her!
You taught Ben priorities.

So today we have to choose 'tween
Two who served in diff'ring ways.
He who spread the Roman model,
She who trusted loving grace.
One has far more fame, tradition,
One has but one story told.
Guide us to the right decision;
To the truth surpassing gold!

For Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky and Martin Luther

Tune: *Down Ampney*, Hymnal '82, 516, Come Down O Love Divine

Come Holy Guide in time
To help us to divine
'twixt saint whose name can't be spelled and one easy.
Faithful in many ways
Each gave to all his days
The service found within his heart and fingers.

Sam took the humble way;
Sought truth without dismay.
In Scripture found new life, fresh truth and wisdom.
Used every gift he bore,
Gave 'til he had no more,
Found Grace within a body fully broken.

Martin sure nailed Rome's gaffes
Which wanted none to ask
The difference 'twixt Christ's teachings and their practice.
His jokes were often crude!
(To Henry 8 quite rude!)
Still he shook up the world, 'twas for the better.

And so whome're we choose
Christ's servants cannot lose.
They each have given what they had to offer.
We all have those we like
For golden halo bright!
Whoever wins the Reign of God won't suffer.

For Sarah and Frank Jägerstätter

Tune: *Coronation*, Hymnal '82, 450, All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

We're richly blessed with countless saints
Both famous and not so.
A matriarch by three faiths praised!
A farmer hardly known.
Each endured crushing, barren strife.
Each deserves ha-a-a-lo of gold.

From Sarah we know empty grief
Can and must be survived.
Was treated as commodity
A child was her desire.
Her true strength we may never know,
Her laughter ri-i-ings through time.

From Frank we see how to refuse
To go along when faced
With evil that destroys the soul
And spurs on loathsome rage.
His praise and prayer from prison cell;
Still ring forth hope in fearful days.

The question placed before us now
Is whose example we
Most need to learn from in our time
As God's true will we seek.
They bless us still, each in their way
Each one a child of God unique.

For Amelia Bloomer and Fanny Crosby

Tune: *Simple Gifts*, Hymnal '82, 554, 'Tis the gift to be simple . . .

'Tis the gift to discover the true gifts we've been giv'n.

'Tis the gift to offer all we have to Heav'n.

To serve as we have talent in each happenstance
is joyous joining in holy dance.

When we receive with heart and mind,
The longings and wisdom that God has designed,
And pour out the insights of our deepest souls,
We honor God and reveal God's love.

She bloomed in a time when women were maligned;
Were seen as weak and frail with feeble minds.
She wrote and she published and she dressed with sense.
In face of scorn she persisted yet.

Thank God for strong Amelia
Who saw what was wrong and who worked to call
Attention of the public to iniquity.
Her work did much to set women free.

A woman with blindness – only in her eyes –
Still exercised her vision true and wise.
Aunt Fanny heard the music in her heart and soul,
With prayer she wrote lyrics that still ring forth.

When with our inward eyes we see
Assurance of God's gen'rous blessings free,
Like her we can choose to share the joy
Of wondrous love that can never cloy.

Praise to God the Creator, pouring forth with love
From the depth of Being all that e're becomes.
Praise to God the Redeemer; with us lived and died,
And rose again e'en though crucified.

Praise to the Spirit flowing free
Who guides, sings and is creativity.
Sing praise to God Who Is Community
The Three in One and the One in Three.

**The Elate Eight
aka the Round of Saintly Kitsch**

For Stephen and Augustine of Canterbury

Tune: *Grosser Gott*, Hymnal '82, 366, Holy God we praise thy name

Holy God we praise thy name
For thy saints who art imperfect.
For we know we are the same,
Flawed, with foibles, that's the verdict.
Yet, like them, you love us still
Why it is we cannot tell.

Novice preachers may mistake
Passion for the love of Jesus.
Stephen earnestly did ache
For your truth to be received.
Didn't use too much finesse!
Thus his ending was a mess.

Augustine obeyed the Pope
Headed out to Canterbury.
Did his best, had lots of hope
He would unify the churches.
Though in ways he did succeed
Unity we've not achieved.

Earnest people often fail.
Still you love and work within us.
We seek for some holy grail
Though you urge us Live with kindness.
Sin and error plague our wills,
But your mercy guides us still.

Holy, blessed Triune God,
Ever gracious, loving, giving.
We would honor you each day
E'en through stumbling, fumbling living.
Help us trust you and obey,
Help us walk your holy ways.

For Martin Luther and Florence Nightingale

Tune: *Purpose*, Hymnal '82, 534, God is working his purpose out

God has brought forth many a saint
O'er years and centuries.
Each one is true holy gift, each one has much to teach.
Each failed to live a perfect life
Each erred in ways that grieve.
And the saints and we need as much grace
As the waters cover the sea.

Martin was a struggling monk
(an Augustinian).
Saw that power and wealth had dimmed
The Light of Love in Rome.
He nailed his truth with eloquence
On doors once closed to grace.
The hope he revealed is for every one
Of every race and all faiths.

Florence could not stay at home
When she saw tragic need.
She poured out her life and skills
To serve those suffering.
She could be tactless on the way
To making nursing real.
But her service to God and to wounded folk
Was grace with human feel.

God still works through human beings
As year succeeds to year.
God works through us in spite of us
A truth that should bring cheers.
Nearer and nearer draws the time,
The time when we'll surely see
That the earth is as full of the mercies of God
As the waters cover the sea.

(If I might be permitted a personal note, I have long loved the hymn "God is working his purpose out", except for one thing. I wince at the line that "the time that will surely be when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God . . ." The earth is already filled with the glory of God. We need grace to open our eyes to see it NOW as well as looking forward to when we will see more clearly. I think the saints are flawed/graced examples of that glory and am grateful for this opportunity each Lent to reflect on that incredible wonder. Thanks, SEC.)

For Franz Jägetstätter and Mechtild of Magdeburg

Tune: *Austria, Hymnal '82*, 522, Glorious things of thee are spoken

When the love of Christ roots deeply
In an open human soul
Power and evil cannot keep that
Love from flowing in the world.
Courage rises, and the Spirit
Whispers truth that must be lived.
For your witnesses we praise you.
Help us serve in our time's needs.

In the face of raging evil
Franz refused to go along.
With the love of Christ his vision
He'd not acquiesce to wrong.
From the cell where his faith led him
Prayers and praises freely poured.
Holy witness, holy martyr,
Pray for us in our time's needs.

Told she had no right to speak of
Gifts and wisdom Spirit-given.
Mechtild's heart-light wisdom flowed out
In words plain folk comprehend.
Faced with conflict and with danger
Still she wrote, still she endured.
Mystic woman, faithful sister
Speak to us in our time's needs.

God of glory ever present,
Ever with us day by day.
Give us grace to live unflinching
In the face of fear and greed.
Help us live and speak your mercy,
Help us live and speak your truth.
With your saints may we be faithful,
Living love in our time's needs.

For Raymond Nonnatus and Amelia Bloomer

Tune: *Diademata*. Hymnal '82, 494 Crown him with many crowns

Praise to our wondrous God
Whose love will never end.
Praise for the grace that flows through all;
For us to share again.
For saints whose lives still sing
God's glory in our world,
That we may give the love received
As awe-filled hearts unfurl.

Praise for a saint whose life
Was given to freeing slaves.
Who gave himself for others' needs
And suffered for his faith.
Patron of silence, he
Has much to give today.
Teach us to listen silently
So our lives speak your grace.

Praise for a woman strong
Who gives a fearless voice
To women who are treated as
A lesser, foolish race.
Her true abiding faith
Gave her the courage to
Write, dress and speak as one beloved
By God who is all Truth.

Praises again we sing
For nurturing and care
Giv'n through the saints before, and now
It's our great gift to share.
For silence and for voice
To hear, proclaim to all
The freedom given in holy love;
Our hope in face of fear.

The Faithful Four

For Franz Jägerstätter and Stephen

Tune: *Lancashire*, Hymnal '82, 555, Lead on O King Eternal

We've vowed to follow Jesus
Whate're the cost might be;
To serve with all that's in us
To live the Truth we've seen.
With gratitude we honor
Those Saints who took the lead.
They lived and died in steadfast
Trust and integrity.

First called to serve as deacon,
To feed the ones in need,
Stephen proclaimed the story
Of Grace through centuries.
Frustrated by the rigid
Who feared the glorious news,
He really let them have it!
And died for speaking truth.

His prayer and faith had taught him
To know where evil lies.
Franz would not fight and kill for
A force malign and vile.
His prison was his altar;
his prayer flowed strong and free.
He died to follow Jesus,
Our glorious Prince of Peace.

The witness of these martyrs
Is still for us today.
In face of lies and evil
What will be our reply?
Baptized to live and die with
The Christ Who is our Life,
We choose each day to follow
In joy, in doubt, in strife.

For Amelia Bloomer and Florence Nightingale

Tune: *England's Lane* Hymnal '82, 416, For the Beauty of the Earth

Thanks for saints of courage bright
Who give all they have for right.
Thanks for those whose words and deeds
Plant some faithful, holy seeds.
So we honor those whose lives
Teach of generous sacrifice.

Saw the horrors that emerged
From the alcoholic scourge.
Saw the needs in women's lives
To make choices, use their minds.
So Amelia wrote and dressed;
Led to hope for those oppressed.

Had a call to care and heal
Soldiers, wounded, weak and ill.
Church and state were quite aghast
But strong Florence won at last.
Nurses, patients, sing her praise
For compassion, for lives saved.

Neither known for public faith,
Yet their lives were firmly based
On the truth they found in prayer
And in worship where their care
For the needy, helpless ones
Caught on holy fire again.

The Golden Halo Round

For Franz Jägerstätter and Florence Nightingale

Tune: *Sine Nomine*, Hymnal '82, 287, For All the Saints

With thanks we sing of saints who in their days
Risky all they had to live true faithful ways.
Risky scorn and lives to walk by light of faith,
Help us to follow, O God beloved.

Franz would not bow to idol; to bent cross.
Though told by pious leaders "go along".
Imprisoned, faced with death he prayed and loved,
Help us to follow, O God beloved.

Though church and family said "you be good",
Florence lived goodness e'en in fields of blood.
Her love for people honors Christ our Lord,
Help us to follow, O God beloved.

We love to sing of glorious saints above!
Yet here's our challenge; living daily love.
So may we choose though others may rebuff.
Help us to follow, O God beloved.

Ode to Franz

Tune: *Hymn to Joy*, Hymnal '82, 376, Joyful, Joyful we Adore Thee

Praise God for the holy martyrs, those well-known and those unsung,
Sing our praises for Franz J who gave his life resisting wrong.
Though the world and church demanded he salute and march to fight;
He was faithful to Christ's teachings, he was faithful to the Light.

Franz would not say evil is good, he would not bow down to power.
His life is a testimony to our call to live each hour
In the truth of love and mercy, in response to neighbors' needs,
In the kindness of our Savior, in the hope the Cross reveals.

Let us join the happy chorus which Lent Madness has inspired,
With the saints who've taught us well that lived love is all God requires.
None are perfect, all have struggled, all have learned the ways of Grace.
May we fumble in their footsteps, 'til we meet Christ face to Face.

Ode to Flo the Golden Halo Winner

Tune: *Hymn to Joy*, Hymnal '82, 376, Joyful, Joyful we Adore Thee

Joyful are the ones who voted for our Florence Nightingale.
Joyful more the ones whose lives and health she guarded without fail.
Joyful are the ones who've followed in her noble nursing ways.
Joyful we who still are learning how to live strong in our faith.

Florence won the Golden Halo long before Lent Madness came.
Faithful to her call to service, faithful to Christ's healing grace.
Longed to serve the church, but sent home, went forth into battle's roar.
So we offer God our praises for such saints who've gone before.

Let us join the happy chorus which Lent Madness has inspired,
With the saints who've taught us well that lived love is all God requires.
None are perfect, all have struggled, all have learned the ways of Grace.
May we fumble in their footsteps, 'til we meet Christ face to Face.

Hymn For all the Saints of Lent Madness

Tune: *Grand Isle*, Hymnal '82, 293, I sing a song of the saints of God

We sing our hymns of the saints of God
Ancient and modern too.
Who lived their faith in simple ways
Or grand heroic moves.
Some stories may have mythical design
And some can be found in history's lines.
And they all had their failings and foibles too,
But God poured out Grace anew.

Each saint has something we need to learn;
Each has a gift to give.
Some stories seem implausible –
Did this one even live?
But like icons these saints and their stories too
Serve as signs of God's ways and what we can do
As we live our own stories of Jesus' love
For God pours out Grace anew.

What makes a saint? We might justly ask.
Whence comes their worthiness?
Sometimes their words and fumbling deeds
Leave us scratching our heads.
But the wonder is found in the countless ways
Love is shown in fact or in mystic haze.
For a saint is partly word and deed
But more in unending Grace.

Appendix

In Honor of the Day that Lent Madness Visited the House of Bishops Meeting

Tune: Lead on O King Eternal

Do they wear purple halos,
Our bishops when they meet?
We know they're mighty holy;
Our spiritual athletes.
May God grant them true wisdom
And joyous humor too!
To lead the Jesus Movement
Needs daily grace renewed!

Posted in Response to the SEC's April Fool's Prank

Dear Friends,

It seems to me that the SEC deserves something for their Lent Madness Poisson d'avril foolery. For reasons I may never comprehend, Hail to the Chief ran through my head this morning, something I can only assume is some saintly snarkery by a saint who didn't appreciate my holy hymning. Ergo:

Hail to the two who have made our Lent so lively.

Hail to the bloggers – our great celebrities!

Hail to the Czar of the daily holy brackets.

Take up your JERKS my friends and let's all sing hail.

Hail to the SU-preme Executive Committee

Hail to the folks who take time to think and vote each day and

Hail to our God Who gives life and joy and laughter

Hail to the Trinity the source of all saints.

Yeah, yeah, I know, the words don't fit the music exactly. But if you look at the words to the actual H2tC, you'll note that they don't either. However, that's not the important issue here. The truly essential question is how we are to decode the mystery set before us by the SEC; e.g. Scott's never-posted Tweet in which he muttered rudely about Jerks. Clearly JERK does not mean "a quick, sudden sharp movement". Ergo, there must be a code we must break.

Below, I propose two possible interpretations:

Jazzed Eggheads Razzing Kooks
Joyful Excess, Raving Kudos

However, neither of these quite work for me. There must be more to the mystery.

If you are inclined to help me solve this conundrum, I've appended a few words that might help you get started (What would we do without Scrabble dictionaries?)

J Joke, Jiving, joyful, Jocund, Japes, Joyful, Jewel, Jibe

E Exclusive, equal, enjoy, examen, equals, excess, evolving, eschewing, equip, exude

R Relicts, rickety, relaxed, razzed, ruckus, raving, ritzy, relaxed, risky, rock, ring, rub

K Kibbitz, kickoff, klutzes, kvetchy, knowing, kazoos, knights, kudzu, kicks, kaput, kudos

Mayhap I am on the wrong road entirely. Who can tell? You may well have spotted clues I've missed. At any rate, help me to comprehend what must, indeed, be deep mystery and to discern the true meaning of JERK.

Your humble hymnologist,
Diana

Announcement!

Lent Madness voter Elizabeth has solved the conundrum. JERK may best be understood as

Joint **E**xecutive **R**eligious **K**night, mayhap a new and Appropriate Title to be bestowed upon The Supreme Executive Committee if they will just make up and play nicely together.