



**17 - 23 Mar, 2019**

**Lent, part 4**

**‘Have mercy upon me, O God,  
According to Your lovingkindness;  
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,  
Blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin.  
For I acknowledge my transgressions,  
And my sin is always before me.  
Against You, You only, have I sinned’ Psalm 51:1-4a**

**Lent leads us to Christ and the glory of His resurrection**

**Lent is not our ultimate destination**

**Lent is a time for prayer, repentance and almsgiving**

- † **Prayer is participating in the life of God, talking with and listening to Him, both in solitude and communal worship**
- † **Repentance is at the heart of our Lenten journey**
- † **Almsgiving is a direct participation in God’s generosity as we give away our resources in love to our neighbor**

**The confession of sins leads to freedom**

- † **The Scriptures teach that confession of sin is like surgery on the soul. It is the means to heal and restore what sin has broken (*Psa 32:3, 5, 11; Jam 5:16*)**
- † **We always need to remember that we are God’s children: adopted, forgiven, filled with the Holy Spirit, called to serve King Jesus, possessing an inheritance that will never fade**
- † **When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (*1 Joh 1:9*)**
- † **Hiding our sins from others and even from ourselves will make us lose peace**
- † **Remember Christ has acted and has already reconciled us to the Father and others by His blood (*Col 1:20*). All we need is to react by confessing our sins**

† A personal confession of sin is grounded in the truth and in naming our sins by their name and surname as Pope Francis asked us to do

### Why repent?

† Repentance is an act

1. of reconciliation with God
2. of reintegration into the Body of Christ, which has been torn apart by sin. For 'if one member suffers, all suffer together' *(1 Cor 12:26)*

† All of the saints are repenting sinners. All sinners are asked to reach holiness

† Repentance is an invitation to a new life

† *'For this life is in truth wholly devoted to repentance. This is why it is necessary to repent, not merely for one or two days, but throughout one's whole life'* Saint John Chrysostom

† In repentance, the world ceases to rotate around oneself and begins to gravitate towards the other, centering on God. Then, everyone and everything no longer exist for myself but for the glory of God

† Repentance is not accompanied by guilt but by an awareness of one's separation from God and one's neighbor

† Compare Judas repentance with Peter's *(Mat 26:69-75; 27:3-10)*

† Repentance is ultimately a gift of the Holy Spirit who transforms the heart of the human person, and not a fruit of individual effort or anguish

### Come to Jesus Christ

*'Sin is so serious that it cost God's own Son, Jesus Christ, His very life. If God takes sin that seriously, shouldn't we as well?'* Billy Graham

† Know Who Jesus Christ is; He came down from Heaven to save us from sin and its wages

† Let us prepare ourselves by revising our sins before going to confession

† We might already know what we need to confess. Let us not hesitate to let Scripture clarify God's moral call on our life, such as the Ten Commandments *(Exo 20:1-17)*, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount *(Mat 5-7)*, Paul's lists of virtues and sins *(Eph 4:24-5:20)*, or Jesus' letters to the seven churches *(Rev 2-3)*

† Be thorough in our confession

† Confession is not enough. We need repentance; pray asking the Holy Spirit's guidance in changing

- † Know that in Christ your sin has been forgiven
- † Go for a fresh start (*Mat 5-7; Gal 5:22-23*)

## Repentance

- † Repentance is a necessity for both the sinner and the righteous man, as Saint John Chrysostom once explained
- † It is the change and renewal from the mind of sin to 'the mind of Christ'; it is a reconsideration of one's views (1Cor 3)
- † Repentance will become a way of life, just as generosity, prayer, forgiveness, fasting and speaking of Jesus are (Mt 5:48)
- † Let our Lord Jesus' light shine on us to show us our sins and clean our hearts and minds

## Zacchaeus (*Lk 19:1-10*)

- † He was eager to meet Jesus in person, carrying all his sins
- † He knew that Jesus would do something about them, about his life
- † As King David prayed in Ps 103 giving glory to God Who removes our sins as far as the east is from the west
- † He knew Jesus is Love not condemnation
- † His sins carried a big load on him, but this did not stop him from seeking Jesus Christ's way
- † When he met Jesus on a personal level, he became free of the slavery of sin (*Jn 8: 32-34*)

## 'I stand at the door and knock' Jesus in (*Rev 3:20*)

refers to mandatory readings

## Verse to memorize

'Create in me a clean heart, O God. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You' Psalm 51:10a,13

## During the coming week, let us pray expectantly

1. seeking the Lord's will to be done in Lebanon
2. for CrossTalk to find a locale
3. for David, Gisele, Habib and Karim
4. to become more of saints and less of sinners
5. to seek the Lord in every word I say, every act I do and every thought I think
6. to help in building His Kingdom by building His Church on earth
7. to deny ourselves, carry our cross and follow Him
8. to thank Him for creating us and each one around us, on His image and likeness, and choosing us to reveal His splendor

9. to all the sick
10. to all those in prison
11. to the unity of the Christians
12. to one another to be honest and not lack integrity
13. to put all that we have in the Lord's hands trusting His management
14. to all the Christians who are being persecuted, and to those who are persecuting them
15. to all families, that the Lord unites the parents together in His Name and stops all fights
16. to the situation in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iraq and the whole region

During this coming week, we will lift the Greek Catholic Church in prayer

<p>الصلاة الربانية  أبانا الذي في السموات  ليتقدس اسمك  ليأت ملكوتك  لتكن مشيئتك  كما في السماء  كذلك على الأرض  أعطنا خبزنا كفاف يومنا  واعفُ لنا خطايانا  كما نغفر نحنُ  لِمَن أساءَ إلينا  ولا تُدخلنا في التجارب  لكن نجنا من الشرير  أمين</p>	<p>قانون الايمان  أؤمن بالله واحد  أب ضابط الكل  خالق السماء والأرض  كل ما يرى وما لا يرى  وبرب واحد يسوع المسيح  ابن الله الوحيد  المولود من الأب قبل كل الدهور  نور من نور، إله حق من إله حق  مولود غير مخلوق  مساو للأب في الجوهر  الذي به كان كل شيء  الذي من أجلنا نحن البشر ومن أجل خلاصنا  نزل من السماء  وتجسد من الروح القدس ومن مريم العذراء  وتأنس  وصلب عنا على عهد بيلاطس البنطي  وتألم وقبر  وقام في اليوم الثالث كما في الكتب  وصعد إلى السماء  وجلس عن يمين الأب  وأيضاً يأتي بمجد عظيم  ليدين الأحياء والأموات  الذي لا فناء لملكه  وبالروح القدس  الرب المحيي  المُنبتق من الأب  الذي هو مع الأب والابن  مسجود له ومُمجّد  الناطق بالأنبياء  ويكنيسة واحدة، جامعة، مقدسة، رسولية  وأعترف بمعمودية واحدة لمغفرة الخطايا  وأترجى قيامة الموتى والحياة في الدهر الآتي  أمين</p>
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