

LENT



*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,
where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.*

LUKE 4 : 1 - 2

ADORER NEWS

Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit: All are invited to this special exhibit created by Blessed Carlo Acutis from Friday, March 1 through Sunday, March 3 at St. Mary's Academy. The exhibit is free, and light refreshments will be available throughout. Families and children are especially welcome.

Confirmand Prayer Cards: We again invite OLV adorers to pick up a prayer card (available later this month) with the name of a confirmand or RCIA candidate from Columbia and Greene counties. Please pray for the grace of the Holy Spirit to illumine and guide the life of Christ in their souls.

Surrender Novena Prayer Cards: A donor has made these available to our Chapel adorers. The author, Servant of God Don Dolindo Ruotolo, who was a friend of Padre Pio's, received from Jesus the words of the Surrender Novena. It is a short but powerful prayer that is especially timely now, when world events feel out of control, and we are trying to grow in trust and abandonment to God's providence.



“As Lent moves on, how helpful would it be to concentrate on some of the Lord’s words. When I was in jail for saying the rosary outside an abortuary, I was allowed to keep only one book – the Bible. I used my time to read whole books of the Bible in one sitting, something I had never done before. Each time I finished reading a Gospel at one sitting, I had the experience of knowing Jesus as I had never known Him before. In fact, the clarity of each evangelist’s picture of Him, most of all the power of His words, electrified me.

Try to find the time to read an entire Gospel at one sitting – perhaps St. Mark’s first, since it is the shortest. In Passiontide (the last two weeks of Lent), read the Gospel of St. John. When you are finished, a powerful word or idea will come welling up in your mind, quite independent of any decision or intention of your own. It will rise in your own thoughts: “This is Your Beloved Son in whom You are well pleased. I must listen to Him.”

Fr. Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R.. *The King, Crucified and Risen*

On Mortification

“Virtue is not merely the absence of vice; it is something pure and positive. Chastity is not merely abstention from sexual wrong, ‘it means something flaming, like Joan of Arc.’

Dale Ahlquist, quoting G.K. Chesterton



LET us be quite clear. Mortification is no mere negative thing; it is the getting rid of self in order to allow Jesus to live His life in us and enable us to share in His life fully. The evil effects of the sin of Adam still remain inasmuch as our passions and our lower appetites are not properly subject to our will. They clamor for satisfaction, rebelling against control, and if they are not checked, they grow from strength to strength and carry us away into sin. In order to submit ourselves completely to Christ, we have to be masters of ourselves... We are like a man driving a donkey; either he drives the donkey or the donkey drives him.

We either rule our passions or they rule us. We are speaking now in general terms. We include under those appetites the desire of bodily pleasure, of ease, of comfort, of gratification, of admiration, of knowledge, of pleasing others, of revenge, of achievement, and all those attempts which self-love makes to control and dictate our actions. The ideal aim in all mortification is to avoid any action, thought, word, or deed which Jesus cannot share and make His own.

We must never forget that from our baptism we have all the things that He did in common with Him, and only He could tell us how He longs to share fully every single moment of our life. Mortification, then, is not performed in any morbid sense of self-hatred or contempt of the body; it is not a mere negative thing, a foolish frustration and self-suppression. It is something quite positive; an assertion of Jesus rather than a denial of self, for we only deny ourselves to find Him, that He may live in us and that we may be united to Him.

M. Eugene Boylan, O.C.R., *This Tremendous Lover*

To Know Our Faults



It is obvious that, unless we know our faults, we cannot detest them and consequently cannot correct them. A study of self very often reveals that self-love has clouded our view, hiding in deceit those faults which are so apparent to those about us and so open to God.

Our faults, sins, and imperfections offend God. We ought to be concerned about those small things of daily life which, if neglected, mean imperfection and very often many imperfections. We would not think of offering serious

offense to a friend; nor would we give slight offense continually. How much more anxious should we be not to offend God even in a slight way.

Moreover, our faults keep us from following our vocation as we ought. They hold us back from perfection and the will to strive for it. Mediocrity and carelessness are signs of failure. Spiritually, we should want, and desire with a great desire, to be holy. We may not and certainly will not reach the perfection of our Lord, but we can set our hearts on doing our best, and God does not ask for more. To say and to think and to feel sorry for our sins and imperfections, that is, to detest them, is the one way to higher things, is the one means to make our wills strong with earnest effort in the correction of our wrong-doing.

It is surely true that our faults are not the only source of our own unhappiness, but are also the frequent cause of the unhappiness of others. Look over your past life; let your conscience bear witness; let your sins testify. Has not sin been the source of worry, remorse, regret, sorrow? For “by what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented.” Have you not wished that you had not committed a certain wrong? Have you not wished to begin anew, so that by avoiding sins you might retain that peace of mind, that serenity of heart that comes from a good conscience...? Has not your unhappiness affected others? Can you not see that your anger, your uncharitableness, your disobedience, your unkindness, and your harsh

criticism have disturbed the peace of those about you? What more evident than the fact that sin does cause unhappiness! When we know and detest our faults, we set about to correct them. We may not, and undoubtedly will not, get rid of all of them at once, but we can be free from all of them through constant and continued perseverance. Such improvement, even though it be little by little, must reach to great spiritual success.

PRAYER TO CORRECT OUR FAULTS

O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, enlighten my mind, that I may know what I have to do or to omit in order to procure Your glory, my own perfection, and the salvation of others. Move my will, that I may efficaciously desire to perform my duties this day.

O my God, You wish to recall me from my erring ways, to vanquish my repugnance to Your holy law, to rouse me from my indifference, to enlighten my ignorance, to raise me up after many falls, to give me all I ask, to help me correct my faults.

O my God, who has doomed all men to die, but has concealed from all the hour of death, grant that I may pass all my days in the practice of holiness and justice, and that I may deserve to leave this world in the peace of a good conscience and in the embrace of Your love; through Christ our Lord.

PRAYER FOR DETESTATION OF SIN

O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, give me the grace to detest my sins as You detest them. Make me see that my sins and imperfections offend You, that they keep me from striving for perfection, that they are the cause of unhappiness to myself and others. Fill my heart with sorrow for sin, that I may never sin again.

O Holy Spirit, soften my heart, that I may detest my sins as I will on Judgment Day, which is so terrible even for the innocent soul.

O Mary, Mother of God, pray for me a poor sinner who places all his confidence in you. St. Joseph, listen to my prayer. All you saints of Paradise, help me to detest my sins and imperfections.

The Eucharist as Sacrifice

The Vatican II document on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, says that every baptized person is a priest – that is to say, someone capable of entering into the sacrificial dynamic of the liturgy. Though the ordained priest alone can preside at the Mass and effect the Eucharistic change, all of the baptized participate in the Mass in a priestly way. They do this through their prayers and responses but also, the document specifies, by uniting their personal sacrifices and sufferings to the great sacrifice of Christ.

So a father witnesses the agony of a son in the hospital; a mother endures the rebellion of a teenage daughter; a young man receives news of a brother's death in battle; an elderly man tosses on his bed in anxiety as he contemplates his unsure financial situation; a graduate student struggles to complete his doctoral thesis; a child experiences for the first time the breakup of a close friendship; an idealist confronts the stubborn resistance of a cynical opponent.



These people could see their pain as simply dumb suffering, the offscourings of an indifferent universe. Or they could see it through the lens provided by the sacrificial death of Jesus, appreciating it as the means by which God is drawing them closer to Himself. Suffering, once joined to the cross of Jesus, can become a vehicle for the reformation of the sinful self, the turning of the soul in the direction of love.

Pain, consciously aligned to the sacrifice of Jesus, can be spiritually transfiguring. Thus, the sufferer becomes, not simply a person in pain, but Abraham giving away what he loves the most, Moses enduring the long discipline of the desert, David confronting Goliath and being pursued by Saul, or the crucified Messiah wondering why he has been forsaken by the Father. The place where this alignment happens is the liturgy, for the liturgy is the representation of the sacrifice of the Lord in all its richness...

Consequently, those who gather, with intentionality and focus, at the altar of Jesus are not simply witnessing the event of the cross; they are sharing in it. And this participation fundamentally changes the manner in

which they experience and interpret their own pain. And thus we can see, finally and fully, the intimate link between the meal and the sacrifice aspects of the Eucharist. Only in the measure that we are transformed through sacrifice, only when our sin and suffering have been dealt with, can we sit down in the fellowship of the sacred banquet. The Eucharistic liturgy is the sacred meal because it is a sacrificial offering. In the Blood of Jesus, the bliss of Eden is restored, and God and human beings are once again friends.



Bishop Robert Barron, *This is My Body*



"By His beatific and infused knowledge, Jesus knew everything about you: your inmost thoughts, the secret motions of your will, whether for good or ill. On earth He was living for and with you. Twenty centuries later you make actual contact with Him... That Christ should have received more comfort and suffered less is your responsibility. "

-A Monk, *The Hermitage Within*. Cistercian Publications.



“Because He was the Son, he sees with total clarity the whole foul flood of evil, all the power of lies and pride, all the wiles and cruelty of the evil that masks itself as life yet constantly serves to destroy, debase, and crush life. Because He is the Son, He experiences deeply all the horror, filth, and baseness that He must drink from the “chalice” prepared for him: the vast power of sin and death. All this He must take into Himself, so that it can be disarmed and defeated in Him.

Jesus’ fear is far more radical than the fear that everyone experiences in the face of death: it is the collision between light and darkness, between life and death itself – the critical moment in human history. With this understanding... we may see ourselves drawn quite personally into the episode on the Mount of Olives: my own sin was present in that terrifying chalice...”

Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth*