



PENITENTIAL SERVICE IN PREPARATION FOR EASTER

Let us stand

Hymn: (appropriate to the Lenten season)

Celebrant: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Seated

Guide: Even this year the Lord grants us a propitious time to prepare ourselves to celebrate with a renewed heart the great mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the foundation of personal and communitarian Christian life.

For the Lenten journey, the Pope invites us to reflect on the exhortation of St. Paul to the Galatians: "Let us not grow tired of

doing good,... . So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all” (Gal 6:9-10).

Let us go back over the journey we have made during this period and participate wholeheartedly in this celebration by recognizing our weakness and asking God to open our eyes and our hearts to His light and wisdom.

“Let us pray above all by looking at the Crucified Lord. Let us open our hearts to the touching tenderness of God, and in his wounds place our own wounds and those of our world. Let us not be always in a rush, but find the time to stand in silence before him” (Homily- Ash Wednesday – 2022, Pope Francis).

Pause for reflection: Let us look at the Crucifix and contemplate his unconditional and gratuitous love for us.

Psalm 50 (51) is prayed slowly by two persons, accompanied by a background music. Assembly joins to sing the refrain:

Assembly: Misericordias Domini, in aeternum cantabo.

S1 Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

S2 My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always before me
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done. **Ref.**

- S1** That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge,
O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived.
- S2** Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow. **Ref.**
- S1** Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all my guilt.
- S2** A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **Ref.**
- S1** Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return to you.
- S2** O rescue me, God, my helper,
and my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise. **Ref.**
- S1** For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would refuse,
my sacrifice, a contrite spirit,
a humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.

S2 In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
holocausts offered on your altar. All stand

PRAYER

Celebrant: Lord, send your Holy Spirit upon us,
who purify our hearts with penance
and transform us into a sacrifice pleasing to you;
in the joy of a new life we will always praise
your holy and merciful name. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Guide: The Pope urges us to take special advantage of this Lenten season to care for those close to us and to reach out to our brothers and sisters who lie wounded along the path of life.

Let us listen to the Gospel

Reader: **GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST LUKE (10: 25-37)**

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him,

and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise. "The Word of the Lord

All: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Seated: *Prolonged silence for reflection*

A Samaritan while travelling, came near the man wounded and was moved with pity; he stopped, approached the man and cared for him personally, even spending his own money to provide for his needs. He also gave him something that in our frenetic world we cling to tightly: he gave him his time. Certainly, he had his own plans for that day, his own needs, commitments and desires. Yet he was able to put all that aside when confronted with someone in need. Without even knowing the injured man, he saw him as deserving of his time and attention.

By his actions, the Good Samaritan showed that "the existence of each and every individual is deeply tied to that of others: life is not simply time that passes; life is a time for interactions".

Each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders. And if we extend our gaze to the history of our own lives and that of the entire world, all of us are, or have been, like each of the characters in the parable. All of us have in ourselves

something of the wounded man, something of the robber, something of the passers-by, and something of the Good Samaritan (*cf. Fratelli tutti*).

The conclusion of Jesus in this passage is a request and perhaps also a command: Go and do likewise (Lk 10:37). He asks us to be neighbours, to approach everyone, to become the neighbour of others. The neighbour is not simply the object of love but the subject who performs actions of love.

Our Rule of Life says: we are called to express to men God's love for them, through the works of mercy; by these works we let the charity of our lovable Redeemer continue to reach out to men from age to age, being ready "to do everything possible, to suffer everything and even to shed our blood for the good of our neighbour" (Cs 2).

"In God, no act of love, no matter how small, and no "generous effort" will ever be lost...his call to sow goodness should not be seen as a burden but a grace. When we sow for the benefit of others, we share in God's own benevolent love....Let us ask God to give us the patient perseverance of the farmer (*cf. Jas 5:7*), and to persevere in doing good, one step at a time. If we fall, let us stretch out our hand to the Father, who always lifts us up. If we are lost, if we are misled by the enticements of the evil one, let us not hesitate to return to God, who "is generous in forgiving" (*Pope Francis*)

We realize that we all need the gift of God's saving love in order to become people who love. We always need God who makes himself our neighbour, so that in our turn we become neighbours. Jesus himself is the good Samaritan who was moved by our life. He bent down to bind our wounds, he took us on himself ...

Let us not grow tired of asking for forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, knowing that God never tires of forgiving

Examination of conscience

Guide: With repentant hearts, let us call on the Lord. May He help us with his Spirit, so that in the Church, a community of redeemed by his mercy, we can unite in his glory.

Your response: *Forgive us O Lord!*

1. Forgive us, Lord, for the times in which we have failed to make ourselves neighbours, have not shown a real concern for each other in compassion, in the image of the concern that You nurture for us. Let us pray.
2. Forgive us, Lord, for the times we are immersed in our problems and in our thoughts and are unable to understand the problems of others. Let us pray.
3. Forgive us, Lord, for harbouring resentment towards those who have hurt us; for not having been merciful as you are and for not having been able to forgive as you forgive us. Let us pray.
4. Forgive us, Lord, for not having recognized your presence in others and that each of your children is unique, unrepeatable and loved by you. Let us pray.
5. Deliver us, Lord, from all prejudices, selfishness, narrow logics, personal gains that do not contribute our actions the broad breath of gratuitousness. Let us pray.

All stand

Let us exchange the sign of peace

Celebrant: In the Spirit of Jesus, our Lord, let us raise to God the Father our filial and trusting prayer:

All: *Our Father...*

Celebrant: Holy Father, that in your goodness
you have renewed us in the image of your Son,
who is the beginning, the way and the end
of all our work,
we pray that in his mercy we may always
find the strength to start anew
and serve with him, in him and like him,
our brothers and sisters

All: Amen.

A thanksgiving hymn

Celebrant: *Let us go in peace.*

All: *Thanks be to God*