

Personal Prayer of Forgiveness



SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

I come before you, O Lord, aware of my sinfulness.
May I trust in your abundant mercy.

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Let us pray

Merciful God,

You showed your glory to our fallen race by sending your
Son to confound the powers of death.

Call us forth from sin's dark tomb. Break the bonds which
hold us, that we may believe and proclaim Christ, the
cause of our freedom and the source of life, who lives and
reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, holy and
mighty God for ever and ever.

FIRST READING: JOEL 2:12-18

A reading from the prophet Joel

Let your hearts be broken, and not your garments torn.

'Now, now - it is the Lord who speaks -
come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning.'

Let your hearts be broken not your garments torn,
turn to the Lord your God again,
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,
and ready to relent.

Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent,
will not leave a blessing as he passes,
oblation and libation for the Lord your God?

Sound the trumpet in Zion!

Order a fast,
proclaim a solemn assembly,
call the people together,
summon the community,
assemble the elders,
gather the children,
even the infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom
and the bride her alcove.

Between vestibule and altar let the priests,
the ministers of the Lord, lament.

Let them say,

'Spare your people, Lord!

Do not make your heritage a thing of shame,
a byword for the nations.

Why should it be said among the nations,
"Where is their God?"

Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land,
took pity on his people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 50 (51) MISERERE

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

My offences 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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

GOSPEL: MARK 12:28-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

This is the first commandment, and the second is similar to it.

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are the three pillars of Lent. Let us reflect upon our Lenten time in light of these three aspects of our pilgrimage towards Easter.

Prayer is consciously placing ourselves in the presence of God. It is being aware that we are part of a bigger story, that our lives form part of a bigger picture. Our prayers don't change God – they change us.

- Do I see God's presence in my ordinary daily living?
- Do I take some time each day to simply be quiet or still?
- Do I read or listen to Scripture regularly?
- Do I see God in all creation – in people, in places, in the environment?
- Do I make prayer a daily habit or do I only pray when I want God to do something for me?

Fasting is about leaving space in our lives for God. It is not just about food, but it is about all aspects of our lives. Fasting needs to include not just the stomach, but also the mind and heart. It is a spiritual discipline that can direct our attention to the deeper things in life.

- Have I given up some of my time and spent it with loved ones, or the sick and “shut-ins”, or spiritual reading or quality reflection time?
- Have I given up words of criticism, negativity, gossip and taken up words of affirmation, gratitude, kindness?
- Have I given up some food or drink, and become more conscious of my spiritual hunger and thirst?
- Have I given up rushing meals and instead, taken time to sit at table with others and enjoyed the food and company?
- Have I given up a hardened or prejudiced heart and prayed to forgive people who have hurt me?
- Have I swapped anger for patience, self-concern for compassion, suspicion for truth, loneliness for hospitality, pretence for sincerity, aggression for friendship and busyness for silence and stillness?

Almsgiving is a practical way in which we show our concern for justice. We offer the gifts God has given us and share them for the common good. It helps us to realise that all things belong to God and that we are merely care-takers of the world resources.

- Have I been thankful for all the blessings and gifts God has given me?
- Have I turned away from apathy and indifference and become involved in a social justice or charitable project?
- Have I made an effort to see people of other nationalities, other creeds, other cultures, as my brothers and sisters?
- Have I offered some of my money, my goods, my talents to those who are in need?
- Have I challenged others when I have heard racist comments or judgmental statements?
- Have I been willing to overcome self-centeredness and selfishness, and serve the community through building-up the common good of all?

Lent is the journey to the great heart of our faith – the Paschal Mystery. It is a time of grace and renewal. May we be aware of the ways in which God is calling us to conversion and transformation, and may we co-operate with God’s loving presence so that we can come to Easter with mind and heart renewed.

PRAYER IN SILENCE

LITANY OF MERCY:

O hand of compassion: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O shepherd of the lost: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O friend of the wayward: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O mender of the broken-heart: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O healer of the wounded: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O lover of the contrite: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O peace of the ages: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O light in the darkness: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O merciful judge: Be merciful to me, a sinner
O Saviour of the world: Be merciful to me, a sinner

God of new life, ease our anxieties, and fill our minds and spirits with trust in the approaching feast of re-birth. Lift the burdens of our hearts so that we may join the praise of God’s new creation. Through Christ our Lord.

In all humility, we dare to pray:

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Almighty and all-merciful God,
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death,
save us in this time of crisis;
grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;
watch over all medical people
as they tend the sick and work for a cure;
stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;
if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,
that hope may never die
and the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
may shine upon us and the whole world.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

Holy Mary, health of the sick, pray for us.
St Joseph, guardian of us all, pray for us.

May God bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting
life. **Amen.**