



ST PAULS MEDIA **pastoral ministry**
AMBUHAY
MISSALETTE

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION, MISSION
SYNOD 2021-2023

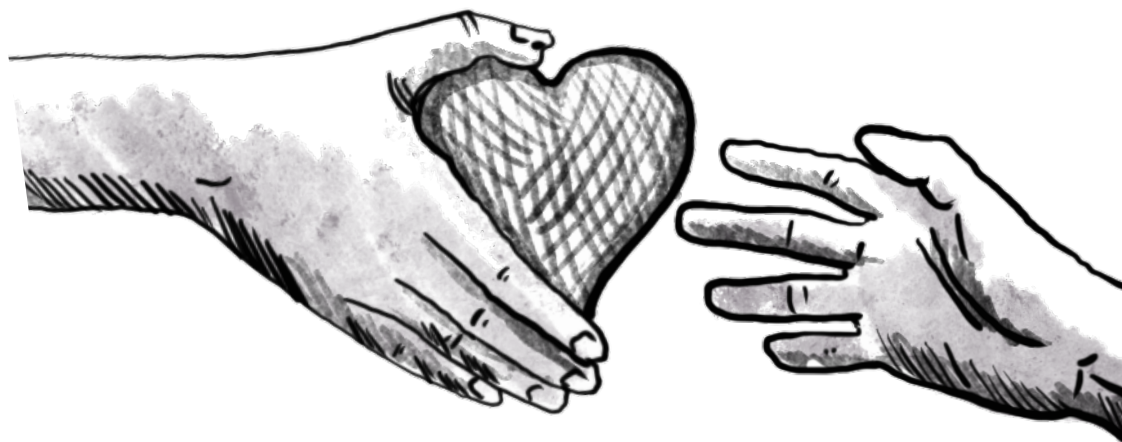


Year 26 No. 8

Friday of the First Week of Lent (A) — Violet

March 3, 2023

GOING BEYOND THE LAW



Cl. Jerome P. Ypulong, SSP

Today's Gospel is part of a longer section (Mt 5:17-48) in which Jesus teaches about what it means to "fulfill" the Law and the Prophets (the entire Old Testament). Having established his deep respect for the Law, Jesus goes on to bring out the deeper meaning of several specific commandments with a series of statements that "you have heard, but I say to you..." rather than setting laws aside, Jesus shows the full meaning of these laws as intended by God, and not as wrongfully interpreted by the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees.

Lent invites us to turn away from our sins and be converted. During this season, we practice fasting, and almsgiving, and we pray and go to confession. But do we

truly live what we practice? Do we take to heart what we perform? Or do we do these things just because we see them as "necessary" since the Church "requires" them?

Alas, the practices that should lead us toward conversion may become just some rules to be followed and performed. Worse, it is as if we do these things so that God may give us what we desire! We have boxed God and made him our genie, granting us what we ask, inasmuch as we perform what He "requires." If this is the image of God that we have, perhaps we need to ask ourselves: Who is this god we serve?

These "must do" practices instead of liberating us and leading us to the path of conversion, become our

oppressors. They simply act as "stoppers" for our unresolved issues, almost as if they were a way to feel protected or safe. Alas, we imagine God as a meticulous accountant or a strict judge, and we risk developing a religious attitude fueled by fear of not being accepted or being punished.

We need to go beyond these pious practices. This does not mean abolishing them or disregarding them. The invitation is that we practice these things to open ourselves to the transformation that God wants to work in us. Let us, therefore, allow the Spirit to work in us so that we may truly fulfill what God intends us to become.

We are given God's Spirit who enables us to grow in our ability to live out the deeper meaning of God's commandments.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 25 (24): 17–18)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

Set me free from my distress, O Lord. See my lowliness and suffering, and take away all my sins.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Jesus encourages us to be reconciled with one another. Our human frailty prevents us from forgiving easily, thus we succumb to being proud. May we courageously heed Jesus' challenge of reconciliation so that our Lenten journey may indeed bear fruit.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

(Pause)

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.

All—For we have sinned against you.

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

All—And grant us your salvation.

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

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Grant that your faithful, O Lord, we pray, may be so conformed to the paschal observances, that the bodily discipline now solemnly begun may bear fruit in the souls of all.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the

unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Ez 18:21–28) *(Sit)*

The Prophet Ezekiel tells us that the Lord delights not in the death of the wicked but in his wholehearted conversion. Those who strive to remain in the state of grace will surely live and not die.

A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel

THUS SAYS THE LORD GOD: If the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says the LORD GOD. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live?

And if the virtuous man turns from the path of virtue to do evil, the same kind of abominable things that the wicked man does, can he do this and still live? None of his virtuous deeds shall be remembered, because he has broken faith and committed sin; because of this, he shall die. You say, "The LORD's way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When someone virtuous turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if the wicked, turning from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins that he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 130)

R—If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, who can stand?

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication. **(R)**

2. If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, LORD, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered. **(R)**

3. I trust in the LORD; my soul trusts in his word. My soul waits for the LORD more than sentinels wait for the dawn. Let Israel wait for the LORD. **(R)**

4. For with the LORD is kindness and with him is plenteous redemption; and he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities. **(R)**

Verse before the Gospel

(Ez 18:31) *(Stand)*

All—Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed, says the Lord, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.

Gospel (Mt 5:20–26)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS said to his disciples: "I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven.

"You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, *Raca*, will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, 'You fool,' will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court. Otherwise your opponent

will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny."

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us pray to God the Father that he may give us his Holy Spirit, so that we can fulfill his commandment of love. For every petition we say:

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—May our Church leaders defend human life from whatever threatens it—abortion, violence, murder, or neglect. We pray: **(R)**

C—May law enforcers follow the way of justice and mercy in maintaining peace and order in the communities. We pray: **(R)**

C—May people refrain from destroying the good name of persons through gossip, bullying, trolling, and spreading "fake news." We pray: **(R)**

C—May we strive to reconcile with those who have something against us so that our Eucharistic sacrifice may be acceptable to our Father in heaven. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we not repay evil for evil but conquer evil through the power of goodness and mercy. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Lord God, give us a new heart and a new spirit, that our sacrifice may become a fragrant offering to you, who live and reign forever and ever.
All—Amen.

LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts

(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...
All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—Accept the sacrificial offerings, O Lord, by which, in your power and kindness, you willed us to be reconciled to yourself and our salvation to be restored.
Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

Preface of Lent I

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.
P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.
P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For by your gracious gift each year your faithful await the sacred paschal feasts with the joy of minds made pure, so that, more eagerly intent on prayer and on the works of charity, and participating in the mysteries by which they have been reborn, they may be led to the fullness of grace that you bestow on your sons and daughters.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:
All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...
All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion
(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Ez 33: 11)

As I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of the sinner, but rather that he turn back and live.

Prayer after Communion
(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)
May the holy refreshment of your Sacrament restore us anew, O Lord, and, cleansing us of old ways, take us up into the mystery of salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing. (*Pause*)
Look with favor on your people, O Lord, that what their observance outwardly declares it may inwardly bring about.
Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (+) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass has been offered. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART *of Jesus*

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions).*

To whom can I turn to if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to you, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted,

protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising and serving you. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled in and by me and all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity for those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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for inquiries and orders:

FACEBOOK: Sambuhay Missalette

GMAIL: sambuhay@stpauls.ph

TEL: (02) 8895-9701