



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST'S AND ST MARY MAGDALENE'S PERTH
St John's Presbytery, 20 Melville Street, Perth, PH1 5PY
01738 259371



Laetare Sunday (Year B) - 14th March 2021

"I took for my patron the glorious St. Joseph and recommended myself earnestly to him... I cannot call to mind that I have ever asked him at any time for anything which he has not granted; and I am filled with amazement when I consider the great favours which God has given me through this blessed Saint; the dangers from which he has delivered me, both of body and of soul."

-St Teresa of Ávila

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Lent

Days of penance have come to us, that we may redeem our sins and save our souls.

Although the time of Lent is now more than half spent, perhaps it would be good to remember what this season is all about. And, if you must admit that you have hardly done anything yet to keep the spirit of Lent, it isn't too late to respond to the call of the Lord, Who says, "Be converted to Me with all your heart!"

Lent is like a retreat and, for all the faithful, a season of reflection and prayerful examination of conscience. It is also just a few days before the Solemnity of beloved St. Joseph, or as St. Teresa called him, "The Glorious St. Joseph."

We should never let this time loom over us with an attitude of dread and threat—nothing could be further from the truth about this season of mercy and peace. Let it be a time of earnest endeavour to grow in your knowledge of Our Divine Saviour—and of your own heart, mind, and soul, as after the Petitions of St. Augustine: "O Lord Jesus, let me know myself, let me know Thee..." And let not the penitential nature of this season discourage anyone, for, coming to know ourselves, we will inevitably—and *beneficially*—come to know the truth of our weakness and sinfulness. An excellent prayer for Lent—short, to-the-point, and easy to pray often—is: "*Holy Spirit, source of truth, make me to know my sins as You know them—and hate them as You hate them.*" The practices of penance and reparation are all for the purpose of obtaining and knowing and glorifying the mercy of our good God. For the mercy of Jesus requires conversion of heart rather than condemnation. During this time, we come to a better understanding of Christ's sacrificial death for us, and we unite our daily sufferings with His. Read what a holy and learned Dominican writes about the fruitfulness of this reparative suffering in union with Our Lord:

After Christ died on the cross and sanctified suffering, He infused divinity into it, so to speak, and made it a kind of sacrament by means of which the graces of heaven descend upon earth. Suffering is the living cross on which and through which every man must be redeemed and saved. Christ redeemed us by giving us the power to redeem ourselves by means of His grace and His Cross. Every Christian is another Christ and as such must suffer and die in order to attain the glory of the resurrection... The fact is that suffering is the great agent of our purification.

Hopefully, the prayers and hymns below will assist you in observing fervently the remainder of the Holy Forty Days.

On Friday 19th we celebrate the Solemnity of beloved St. Joseph. In our lives, we have experienced so many times the gracious assistance of this saint, whom we have learned to know and love as a father. Indeed, he was God's representative on earth to love and care for His Son, our Saviour, and what he was for Jesus he is for us—one of God's great means of expressing His love for each one of His children. The Church takes the words referring to the Old Testament patriarch to urge her children to trust in the intercession of this saint: "Go to Joseph!"

May you receive abundantly all the graces Our Lord wishes to bestow on you during these days of contemplating His sufferings for us. May the penances of your Lent bear good fruit in new conversion of soul and true, peaceful joy on the day of His Resurrection.

The Practices of Lent

Prayer

Fasting

Almsgiving

"We read in the book of Tobias that the Angel Raphael thus spoke: 'Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold.' (Tob. 12:8) These three good works are the fruits of the virtues of religion, mercy and temperance, which have a great affinity with piety, justice and sobriety. For as piety regards God, justice our neighbour, and sobriety ourselves, so also prayer, which is an act of religion, regards God; almsgiving, which is an act of mercy, regards our neighbour; fasting, which is an act of abstinence, regards ourselves." –

St. Robert Bellarmine, Doctor of the Church (17th century), *The Art of Dying Well*

We ought always to pray and not to faint.... Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times. –

St. Luke's Gospel



On the merit of prayer, we have the testimony of Christ Himself in the Gospel: ‘And when you pray, do not be as the hypocrites that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets that they may be seen by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But you, when you pray, enter into your chamber, and having shut the doors, pray to your Father in secret, and your Father, Who sees in secret, will repay you.’ (Mt. 6:5-6) By these words, Our Lord does not forbid us to pray in a public place, for He Himself prayed publicly.... But He forbids public prayer when it is done so that we may be seen praying by many, and thus through vainglory.... [We must] find a ‘chamber’ for our heart, and in it pray to God ‘in secret’”. – St. Robert Bellarmine, Doctor of the Church (17th century), *The Art of Dying Well*

“When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites who disfigure their faces in order to

appear to men as fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that you may not be seen fasting by men but by your Father Who is in secret; and your Father, Who sees in secret, will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where rust and moth consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither rust nor moth consumes nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.” – Gospel of St. Matthew, 6:16-21

“Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person, for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee...for alms deliver from all sin and from death and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the most high God to all them that give it.” – Tobias, 4: 7, 11-12

Be converted to Me with all your heart....

Scripture, Liturgical Prayers, Hymns and Meditations for

Lent



Thou hast mercy upon all, O Lord, and hatest none of the things which Thou has made, overlooking the sins of men for the sake of repentance and sparing them because Thou art the Lord our God. (Wisdom 11:24, 25, 27) Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for my soul trusts in Thee. (Psalm 56:2) – Mass of Ash Wednesday

Thus says the Lord: Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping and in mourning. And rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to forgive evil.... (Joel 2: 12-14) – Mass of Ash Wednesday

Lord, repay us not according to the sins we have committed nor according to our iniquities. (Psalm 102:10) O Lord, remember not our past sins; let your mercy come quickly to us, for we are being brought very low. Help us, O God our Saviour, and for the glory of Your Name, O Lord, deliver us; and pardon us our sins for Your Name's sake. (Psalm 78:8-9) – Masses of Lent

Hymn for Matins in Lent

(“Ex mori docti mystico”)

The fast, as taught by holy lore,
We keep in solemn course once more,
The fast to all men known, and bound
In forty days of yearly round.

The Law and seers that were of old
In divers ways this Lent foretold,
Which Christ, all seasons' King and
Guide,
In after ages sanctified.

More sparing therefore let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,

Our sleep and mirth; yea, closer barred
Be every sense in holy guard.

Avoid the evil thoughts that roll
Like waters o'er the heedless soul;
Nor let the foe occasion find
Our souls in slavery to bind.

In prayer together let us fall,
And cry for mercy, one and all,
And weep before the Judge's feet,
And his avenging wrath entreat.

Thy grace have we offended sore
By sins, O God, which we deplore;
But pour upon us from on high,
O pardoning One, thy clemency.

Remember thou, though frail we be,
That yet Thine handiwork are we;
Nor let the honour of thy Name
Be by another put to shame.

Forgive the sin that we have wrought,
Increase the good that we have sought;
That we, at length, our wanderings o'er,
May please thee here and evermore.

Grant, O thou blessed Trinity,
Grant, O essential Unity,
That this our fast of forty days
May work our profit and thy praise. Amen.



Hymn for Vespers in Lent

(“Audi benigne conditor”)

Thou loving Maker of mankind,
Before Thy throne we pray and weep!
Oh, strengthen us with grace divine
Duly this sacred Lent to keep.

Searcher of hearts! Thou dost our ills
Discern, and all our weakness know;

Again to Thee with tears we turn,
Again to us Thy mercy show.

Much have we sinned; but we confess
Our guilt, and all our faults deplore:
Oh, for the praise of Thy great name
Our fainting souls to health restore!

And grant us, while by fasts we strive
This mortal body to control,
To fast from all the food of sin,
And so to purify the soul.

Hear us, O Trinity thrice blest!
Sole Unity! to Thee we cry:
Vouchsafe us from these fasts below
To reap immortal fruit on high. Amen.

Stabat Mater (13th century)

At the cross her station keeping,
Mary stood in sorrow weeping
When her Son was crucified.

Mary, fount of love's devotion,
Let me share with true emotion
All the sorrow you endured.

While she waited in her anguish,
Seeing Christ in torment languish,
Bitter sorrow pierced her heart.

Virgin, ever interceding,
Hear me in my fervent pleading:
Fire me with your love of Christ.

With what pain and desolation,
With what noble resignation,
Mary watched her dying Son.

Mother, may this prayer be granted:
That Christ's love may be implanted
In the depths of my poor soul.

Ever patient in her yearning
Though her tear-filled eyes were burning,
Mary gazed upon her Son.

At the cross, your sorrow sharing,
All your grief and torment bearing,
Let me stand and mourn with you.

Who, that sorrow contemplating,
On that passion meditating,
Would not share the Virgin's grief?

Fairest maid of all creation,
Queen of hope and consolation,
Let me feel your grief sublime.

Christ she saw, for our salvation,
Scourged with cruel acclamation,
Bruised and beaten by the rod.

Virgin, in your love befriend me,
At the Judgment Day defend me.
Help me by your constant prayer.

Christ she saw with lifeblood failing,
All her anguish unavailing,
Saw Him breathe His very last.

Saviour, when my life shall leave me,
Through your mother's prayers receive me
With the fruits of victory.

Virgin of all virgins blest!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share your grief divine.

Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,
Lest in flames I burn and die,
In His awe-full judgment day.

Let me, to my latest breath,
In my body bear the death
Of your dying Son divine.

Saviour, when my life shall leave me,
Through your mother's prayers receive me
With the fruits of victory.

Wounded with His every wound,
Steep my soul till it has swooned
In His very Blood away.

While my body here decays
May my soul your goodness praise,
Safe in heaven eternally. Amen.

This time of fasting has opened to us the gates of paradise. Let us accept it, praying and beseeching that on the day of resurrection we may be glorified in the Lord...— **Divine Office of Lent**

RECENTLY DEAD: John Flynn, Patrick Horsburgh

ANNIVERSARIES: John Hill, Mary Canning, Alec Brise, Lucy O'Hare, Willie Muldownie, Tommy Winning.

**Spiritual Life. A Treatise on Ascetical & Mystical Theology
by the Very Reverend Adolphe Tanqueray, S.S., D.D.**

The affective knowledge of God leads us to the holy exercise of the presence of God. We shall now note briefly the foundation, the practice, and the advantages of this exercise.

A) Its foundation is the doctrine of God's omnipresence. God is everywhere, not only by His all-contemplating vision and His all-pervading action, but likewise, by His substance. As St. Paul told the Athenians: "In Him we live, and move, and are." This is true from both the natural and the supernatural point of view. As Creator, after having given us our being and our life, He preserves us and quickens our faculties by His concurrence. As Father, He begets us unto the supernatural life, which is a participation in His own, He co-operates with us as principal cause in its preservation and its growth, and He is thus intimately present in us,

within the very centre of our soul, yet without ceasing to be distinct from us. As we have said above, it is the Triune God that lives in us: the Father, Who loves us as His children, the Son Who deals with us as His brethren, and the Holy Ghost Who gives us both His gifts and Himself.

B) The Practice of This Exercise. To find God, then, we need not seek Him in the heavens.

a) We find Him close by in the creatures round about us. It is there that we look for Him at the outset. One and all suggest to us some divine perfection, but it is especially so of those creatures which, endowed with intellect, are the dwelling places of the Living God. These constitute for us the steps, as it were, of a ladder by which we ascend to Him.

b) We know, moreover, that God is near those that confidently invoke Him: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him," and our soul delights to call to Him now by ejaculatory prayers, now by long supplications.

c) Above all we recall the fact that the Three Divine Persons dwell within us and that our heart is a living tabernacle, a Heaven, wherein They give Them-selves to us even now. It is enough, then, simply to recollect ourselves, to enter within the inner Sanctuary of our soul, as St. Catherine of Sienna calls it, and contemplate with the eyes of faith the Divine Guest Who deigns to abide there. Then shall we live under His gaze, under His influence; then shall we adore Him and co-operate with Him in the sanctification of our souls.

C) It is easy to see the advantages of this exercise for our sanctification.

a) It makes us carefully avoid sin. Who shall dare offend the majesty of God while realising that God actually dwells within him, with His infinite holiness that cannot endure the least blemish, with His infinite justice obliging Him to punish the slightest fault, with His power to punish the guilty, above all with His goodness, forever seeking our love and our fidelity!

b) It stimulates our zeal for perfection. If a soldier fighting under the eyes of his commander is inspired to multiply his feats of valour, should we not be ready to undergo the most strenuous labours, to make the greatest efforts when conscious that not only does the eye of God watch us in our struggle, but that His victorious arm ever sustains us? Could we lag, when

encouraged by the immortal Crown He holds out to us, and above all, by the greater love He bestows on us as a reward?

c) What great trust does not this thought inspire in us! Whatever may be our trials, our temptations, our weariness and our weakness, are we not assured of final victory, when we recall that He, Who is All-powerful, Whom nothing can resist, dwells within us and invests us with His power? Doubtless, we may sustain partial reverses and experience excruciating anguish, yet we are certain that, supported by Him, we shall conquer, and that even our crosses will but make us grow in God's love and multiply our merits.

d) Lastly, what a joy for us is the thought that He Who is the Joy of the Elect, and Whom we shall see one day face to face, is even now our portion, Whose presence and conversation we may enjoy all day long! The knowledge and the habitual thought of God are, therefore, most sanctifying. The same is true of the knowledge of self.



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14 Marzec - IV Niedziela Wielkiego Postu

Wahadełko nad kotлетem

Wszyscy na- czelnicy Judy, kapłani i lud mnożyli nieprawości, naśladować wszelkie obrzydliwości narodów pogańskich. – Słyszymy tysiące razy, że na Zachodzie coś już dawno zaistniało, dlatego najwyższy czas, by i Polacy poszli tymi samymi śladami. Tak się argumentuje związki homoseksualne, aborcję, eutanazję, polityczne i ekonomiczne mody. Jerozolima spłonęła, ponieważ nikomu serce nie płonęło już miłością do Boga przy czytaniu świętych wierszy Tory.

Historia wraca. Dziś ludzie zamiast szkaplerza noszą amulety, zamiast klęczeć przy konfesjonale, leżą na kozetkach psychoanalityków lub chodzą do wróżki. Dzieci zamiast medalików z aniołami noszą w kieszeniach pokemony. Młodzież rozczytuje się w „Kodzie Leonarda da Vinci”, który szatkuje jej inteligencję skuteczniej niż nóż pekińską kapustę. Plakaty zapraszają na medytacje transcendentalne, które za jedyne 50 złotych obiecują przeniesienie w inny wymiar. Dlaczego tak się dzieje? Harald Baer stwierdza: „Eksplodacja okultyzmu jest zjawiskiem protestu przeciw skostniałemu chrześcijaństwu”. Fascynacja okultyzmem to przejaw niewystarczalności elementu mistycznego w Kościele, a także pewnej ignorancji. Znachorstwo, wróżbiarstwo, jasnowidztwo, medytacje wschodnie i wiele innych alternatywnych bezdroży duchowych wypycha człowieka w ewolucyjny regres. Oczywiście dla pełniejszego obrazu potrzeba jeszcze alternatywnej medycyny, homeopatii, uzdrowienia magią, odrobinę spirytyzmu, hipnozy, bioenergoterapii, radiestezji, tajemniczych transów. Może jeszcze wahadełko nad kotлетem sprawdzające, czy jest duchowo pozytywny, i jeszcze kilka akupunkturowych szpilek srebrnych w czubek zadartego nosa. Co jest efektem takich poszukiwań? Niewyjaśnione depresje, nieobliczalne zachowania, niekontrolowane pożądanie, seksualne deformacje, złość nie do powstrzymania, obsesyjne myśli i uczucia, nieustanny strach, niepokój, nerwowość lub neurotyczne zachowanie, myśli samobójcze, obojętność dla spraw duchowych, bluźniercze myśli przeciwko Bogu, wstręt do sakramentów, powtarzające się niepowodzenia. Nie każda duchowość jest od Ducha Świętego, istnieją również duchy ciemniejsze niż noc i wprowadzające człowieka w coś gorszego niż zwykła ciemnota. „Magia jest mocą bezbronnych” – wyjaśnia Hubert Kohle. Czy można się dziwić, że w Polsce mamy dwa razy więcej egzorcystów niż dziesięć lat temu? Czy można się dziwić, że są przeciążeni i oblężeni przez przerażonych penitentów? Nikodem przyszedł w nocy i rozmawiał w ciemnościach z Jezusem. On był w ciemnościach. Właściwie to ciemności zmusiły go do poszukiwania Jezusa. To, co przymusza nas do nawrócenia, to zniewolenie ciemnością, widoczne działanie sił mroku. Kto spełnia wymagania prawdy, zbliża się do światła. Wielu ludzi powraca do Boga dopiero wtedy, gdy bezbożność doprowadza ich do takiej męki, że życie staje się dla nich nie do wytrzymania. Jak z tego wyjść? Pierwsza rzecz – to powrócić do Jezusa Chrystusa, choćby w ciemnościach nocy!

- Fr Bogdan

Bóg



Bóg – oczekiwany stanął pośród ludzkości – a ludzie wyrzucili Go poza bramy swoich sei ukrzyżowali za miastem...

Ręce Chrystusa błogosławiły – wyciągały się nad chorymi – a człowiek gwoździami je uwięził.

Nogi Chrystusa śpieszyły do każdego potrzebującego pomocy – a człowiek na krzyżu je unieruchomił.

Usta Chrystusa głosiły słowo, przebaczenie niosły – a człowiek żółcią i octem je napoił.

Serce Chrystusa przepętnione dobrocią, miłością, miłosierdziem – a człowiek je włócznią przebił.

Na poświęcenie i miłość człowiek zbrodnią odpowiada... doznawszy dobroci Boga „ukrzyżuj” woła i prowadzi na Golgotę, przybija do krzyża, szydzi ze Zbawiciela.... A On za nas umiera.

Paradoks człowieka – do dobra tęskni, do dobra się wyrwa – i dobro prześladuje. Dobro odrzuca i dobro krzyżuje. Rękę, która błogosławi przeklina i pluje... a ona nadal błogosławi, do serca przygarnia, przebacza i daruje.

19 marca – Uroczystość św. Józefa



W sprawie szczegółów życia św. Józefa musimy polegać na tym, co przekazały o nim Ewangelie. Poświęcają mu one łącznie 26 wierszy, a jego imię wymieniają 14 razy. Józef pochodził z rodu króla Dawida. Wykazuje to św. Mateusz w genealogii przodków św. Józefa. Mimo wysokiego pochodzenia Józef nie posiadał żadnego majątku. Na życie zarabiał stolarstwem i pracą jako cieśla. Zdaniem św. Justyna (ok. 100 - ok. 166), który

żył bardzo blisko czasów Apostołów, Józef wykonywał sochy drewniane i jarzma na woły. Przygotowywał więc narzędzia gospodarcze i rolnicze.

Zaręczony z Maryją, Józef stanął przed tajemnicą cudownego poczęcia. Nie był według ciała ojcem Chrystusa. Był nim jednak według prawa żydowskiego jako prawomocny małżonek Maryi. Chociaż więc Maryja porodziła Pana Jezusa dziewiczo, to jednak wobec prawa żydowskiego i otoczenia Józef był uważany za ojca Pana Jezusa. Tak go też nazywają Ewangelie. W takiej sytuacji trzeba było wykazać, że Józef pochodził w prostej linii od króla Dawida, jak to zapowiadali prorocy. Kiedy Józef dowiedział się, że Maryja oczekuje dziecka, wiedząc, że nie jest to jego potomek, postanowił dyskretnie usunąć się z życia Maryi, by nie narazić Jej na zhańbienie i

obmowy. Wprowadzony jednak przez anioła w tajemnicę, wziął Maryję do siebie, do domu (Mt 1-2; 13, 55; Łk 1-2). Podporządkowując się dekretowi o spisie ludności, udał się z Nią do Betlejem, gdzie urodził się Jezus. Po nadaniu Dziecku imienia i przedstawieniu Go w świątyni, w obliczu prześladowania, ucieka z Matką i Dzieckiem do Egiptu. Po śmierci Heroda udaje się do Nazaretu. Po raz ostatni Józef pojawia się na kartach Pisma Świętego podczas pielgrzymki z dwunastoletnim Jezusem do Jerozolimy. Przy wystąpieniu Jezusa w roli Nauczyciela nie ma już żadnej wzmianki o Józefie. Prawdopodobnie wtedy już nie żył. Miał najpiękniejszą śmierć i pogrzeb, jaki sobie można na ziemi wyobrazić,

gdyż byli przy św. Józefie w ostatnich chwilach jego życia: Jezus i Maryja. Oni też urządzili mu pogrzeb. Może dlatego tradycja nazwała go patronem dobrej śmierci. Ikonografia zwykła przedstawiać Józefa jako starca. W rzeczywistości był on młodzieńcem w pełni męskiej urody i sił. Sztuka chrześcijańska zostawiła wiele tysięcy wizerunków Józefa w rzeźbie i w malarstwie.

Ojcowie i pisarze Kościoła podkreślają, że do tak bliskiego życia z Jezusem i Maryją Opatrzność wybrała męża o niezwyklej cnocie. Dlatego Kościół słusznie stawia św. Józefa na czele wszystkich świętych i daje mu tak wyróżnione miejsce w hagiografii.

Spotkanie Rodziców Dzieci Pierwszo-komunijnych

Zapraszam wszystkich rodziców dzieci z klasy pierwszo-komunijnej na spotkanie 17 marca 2021 r. o godz. 18:30pm do kościoła. Na spotkanie to nie zabieramy dzieci i wystarczy obecność jednego z rodziców.