

Fourth Sunday of Lent



*Walking Our Lenten Journey
with Jesus the Lord,
Our Light*

Introduction

Through the energy of love, with the Beloved, we are making our Lenten journey - a special grace filled time for each one of us. We entered this prayerful Season of Lent with ritual of beautiful symbols - ash, water and oil, with a holy purpose and wholeheartedly. Since then, three weeks have past. Today we have entered the 26th day of this special journey. With deeper silence and solicitude may we have the strength and grace to enter the Paschal Mystery of Christ through whom the whole of creation is being redeemed.

Traditionally this Sunday is called 'Laetare Sunday'. A day of celebration within the austere period of Lent. The book of Nehemiah says "the joy of the Lord is your strength". 8:10.



Hymn: Christ be Our Light.

Christ be our Light, shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness.
Christ be our Light, shine in your Church gathered today.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness, longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice.

Longing for food many are hungry, longing for water many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building sheltering others, walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come.

Woman at the wedding meal.
See the miracle revealed.
The glory of your Son to all around.

Woman waiting at the door.
Your Son is now your Son no more.
To all the world He gives His life.

Woman standing by the crowds.
With those around you wondrous,
At the child that you had once borne in your womb.

Woman in the upper room.
In the frightened air and gloom
See your Son in glory now appear.



Prepared by Sr Shanti D'Rozario, Bangladesh

Jesus, you seek out those who are lost, forgiving us again and again; let our lives so mirror your compassionate and merciful love that those who are wounded by sin will be drawn to you...

Jesus, your mercy reached out to all in need; heal the sick. We pray for our Sisters, families and all those who have been affected by Covid-19...

Jesus, into your hands we commend the dead, the father of Sister Jiovanna Lozada, the sister of Sister Roseline D'Costa and those who have died recently.

Our Father

Closing prayer

O God you are our Light, and without you all our ways are darkness. Heal our blindness and lead us to the light of your truth. Help us to overcome all that keeps us from following your commandments. During this coming week give us the grace we need to continue the journey with you growing in deeper love for you and for one another. This we ask through Christ Jesus, the Light of the world. AMEN.

Magnificat.

Magnificat, magnificat, your Son proclaims the glory of the Lord.

Woman asked to bear a son.
A child who would compare with none.
Did you know the pain that lay ahead?

Woman in the temple stands.
Old man takes the child in his hands.
Did his words bring fear into your heart?

Reflection

Pope Francis in his 2020 Lenten message said:

“Putting the Paschal Mystery at the centre of our lives means feeling compassion towards the wounds of the crucified Christ present in many innocent victims of wars, in attacks on life, from that of the unborn to that of the elderly, and various forms of violence. They are likewise present in environmental disasters, the unequal distribution of the earth’s goods, human trafficking in all its forms, and the unbridled thirst for profit, which is a form of idolatry”.

This year, the Pope’s Ash Wednesday’s message to us is; “Lent is a humble descent both inwards and outwards to others. It is not an ascent to glory, but a descent to love”. For “the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, and his mercies never come to an end: they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness”. Lam: 3:22-23.

Instead of descent to love in many forms so many of us – people and nations are ascending to glory and power every day. One of the recent examples is the military coup in Myanmar.

We also have the reason to rejoice for our Leader/s and ordinary people as well, who with much prayer and reflection in humility descending both inward and outward to others during this Holy Lent. One of the outstanding events is, the first ever historic visit of Pope Francis to Iraq that took place earlier this month. Pope’s visit to Iraq amid the threat of Covid-19 is an enlivened hope in the midst of suspicion, misunderstanding hatred, and resultant violence. For Pope Francis, “Fraternity is the way forward”.



All the readings of today express God’s unfailing mercy and faithful love for God’s people no matter how unfaithful and sinful we are. For “on the cross love proved stronger than sin”. Darkness became everlasting Light.

Now let us take some time and sit in silence together with the Beloved and reflect;

During this Holy Season of Lent did Christ's light shine in me brighter than usual and did I become an instrument of peace and harmony to others?

Am I compassionate, loving, kind and forgiving in my thoughts, words and actions towards my sisters and brothers in my daily encounter with them?

What is the quality of my prayer?

Am I patient with myself and with others?

Do I allow my eyes to behold the radiance of creation's glory and what have I done to keep creation alive?



Pray together Psalm 137

Plunge into the Ocean of Love, where heart meets Heart,
Where sorrows are comforted, and wounds are mended.
There, melodies of sadness mingle with dolphin songs of joy;
Past fears dissolved in deep harmonic tones,
The future –pure mystery.
For eternal moments lived in total surrender
Glide smoothly over troubled waters.

Glory to You, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.

Reading:

Where there is charity and wisdom, there is neither fear nor ignorance.
Where there is patience and humility, there is neither anger nor disturbance.
Where there is poverty with joy, there is neither covetousness nor avarice.
Where there is inner peace and meditation, there is neither anxiousness nor

dissipation. Where there is mercy and discernment, there is neither excess nor hardness of heart.

Francis of Assisi, Francis and Clare, p.35, (1)

Quiet time

Hymn: Pour Out Compassion and Mercy. (Mechtild of Magdeburg, Woman's Song of God)

Pour out compassion and mercy, from the depth of your heart.

And give to the poor and the broken the service of your love.

Chorus:

In so far as you do these holy deeds, with all the love of your soul. Then, you will resemble me, your God, and I will make you whole.

If you seek out and find the stranger and comfort the lonely of heart and offer them your friendship, then, my justice you impart.

So pour out compassion and mercy from the depth of your heart
And give to the poor and the broken the service of your love.

Intercessions: Response - Christ be our Light.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so Jesus, you were lifted up on the cross to reconcile to God the whole of creation, making peace through the blood of your cross...

Jesus, you came to reconcile us to God and to one another – make our Pope Francis an effective messenger of your mission of lasting peace and reconciliation in the land of Iraq, where his recent visitation took place...