



First Sunday of Lent
March 9, 2014

Introductory Rites

Greeting

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

C: *Amen*

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: *And with your spirit.*

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, in the midst of the interplay of Good and Evil, will help the victory of the Good by being in solidarity with the poor who resist the earthiness of personal egoism, social greed, despotism and tyranny.

As we seek to understand the level of growth of our Basic Ecclesial Communities, we need to discover and rediscover more deeply the faith and its inspirations that we share together. It is important for us to realize that this faith of ours was not just provoked by the present age, but was handed down to us as a heritage of the church. We did not invent this faith as a response to our sense of wonder and awe, our needs and wants in our going through life, but it has been a message that resonated and was shared by humanity throughout the ages. We have received the faith through the tradition of evangelization: the gospel was preached to our ancestors who believed. We have been recipients of this great tradition of evangelization and handing over of the faith, both as a response of past generations of communities, and as our individual personal response and commitment to God's invitation to believe.

In this light, PCP-II reflects on the heritage of our evangelization, thus:

(10) "The Faith came to us, though not always without an element of duress, in an age which glorified the union of cross and sword. Yet, notwithstanding, the faith was implanted deeply, making of us over time one people, one nation, though riven, even as we still are, by geography, cultural traditions, languages, ethnic origins. The outward symbols of the faith were alien to us but we made them our own: we enriched them, transmuted them. We invested them with a spirit that is wholly ours."

Why does PCP-II say that faith came to us "though not always without an element of duress"? What was that age that "glorified the union of cross and sword"? Is it true that this faith in fact was instrumental in making us one people and one nation? What is our experience of this faith today? Are there elements, regulations and policies in our BECs that in fact tend to perpetuate the element of duress and the union of cross and sword in our keeping the faith? How so? How are they related to the co-existence of good and evil, to our tendency for personal egoism and social greed expressed in the temptations for economic, political and religious power? What is our discernment on the movement and call of the Spirit in this situation? ■

Introduction and Welcome

Dear Friends: On this First Sunday of Lent, we take to heart the Church's declaration that today is National Migrants' Sunday. She exhorts us, saying: "We reflect on the plight of millions of overseas contract workers, migrants, and their families. We pray for all the people on the move, most especially Filipinos in the "diaspora", so that they will be instruments of the Good News through their humble and selfless service of God and people." We pray also for the host countries. May they realize that as stewards of God's creation, they are called to share His love and riches.

Penitential Act

P: Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us now acknowledge our sins, and ask God for pardon and strength.

P: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

A: For we have sinned against you.

P: Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

A: And grant us your salvation.

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

A: Amen.

Collect

P: Let us pray: Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Gen 2,7-9; 3,1-7

L: A reading from the book of Genesis
The LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being. Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made various trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the LORD God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?" The woman answered the serpent: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman: "You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is evil." The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on Gen 2,7-9; 3,1-7:

What does it mean to be human? This is the second account about creation, a

Yahwist narrative editorially inserted here by the Priestly tradition. Our humanity (ha'adam) does not rest on our materiality, "dust of the ground/earth" ('adamah) which we share with all animals and with the rest of creation, but on the breath, (ruah) of God inside our "dustness/earthiness": the Spirit of God that dwells inside us. This original human life grew up in the Garden of Eden, a pun with being human and made of the ground: a place of daintiness, of innocence and of perfection. In that garden, human life was nourished by trees that bore good food to satisfy one's appetite, by the tree of life and by the nourishment of freedom as symbolized by the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Where is the origin of evil, violence, injustice, oppression – sin? The serpent symbolizes the inner unbridled appetite of every human being and his/her inability to discern in the ambiguity of good and evil. Temptation does not come from the woman, pictured as active and discerning, but from the tree that "was good for food, pleasing to the eyes and desirable to gain wisdom." The man, with whom the woman shared the fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, is pictured as the quiet, gullible unthinking male. Thus, the origin of sin, evil, violence of injustice and oppression is this: when the human being claims to be the sole possessor of moral judgment, and takes away from God the sole sovereignty over life and creation. Humanity self-destructs – "they knew that they were naked" – when it attributes to its earthiness the sole prerogatives of God. This has been the experience of egoism, selfishness, despotism and tyranny.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 51,3-4. 5-6. 12-13. 17

R: (cf. 3a) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.

R: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always: "Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight."

R: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

R: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Commentary on Ps 51:

Ps 50 and 51 form one bilateral legal confrontation or judicial lawsuit between God and his people. In this forensic justice, God is the accuser and the people are the accused. In the bilateral judicial process, God is the judge. Ps 51 is the response of the accused, the people. The accused owns up to the offense and is led to the profound realization of the abysmal depth of his crime. His accuser is his sole liberator by his total forgiveness and mercy and by his gift of a new heart and ever-abiding presence in the penitent. The penitent knows that his true joy is in the salvation which only God can give and in an obedient spirit which only God can sustain. Even his capacity to praise and thank God, his

liberator and savior, is a gift in itself from his God.

Second Reading: Rom 5,12-19/Rom 5,12.17-19

L: A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: Through one man sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all men, inasmuch as all sinned—for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world, though sin is not accounted when there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin after the pattern of the trespass of Adam, who is the type of the one who was to come. But the gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one, the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one man Jesus Christ overflow for the many. And the gift is not like the result of the one who sinned. For after one sin there was the judgment that brought condemnation; but the gift, after many transgressions, brought acquittal. For if, by the transgression of the one, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so, through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on Rom 5,12-19:

Using his favorite argumentative form, Paul now argues for our salvation through the anti-thesis and contrast of Adam and Christ as types of origins: the former of sin and death, the latter of forgiveness, reconciliation and salvation. Note that Paul here is presenting the origin of sin and death not as Eve or woman, but in its generic form: Adam, the old humanity. Original sin and death are not just an “inheritance”, which may exclude personal sins, but a “patrimony” which makes every human being sin. The antithesis to Adam is Christ. He is the new humanity: the gift through whom God’s grace of salvation overflows for the many.

The contrast: Adam committed one transgression that brought judgment and condemnation; Christ, through his one just act, brought life, abundance of grace and justification for all. The first through disobedience made many sinners, the second, through obedience, has made many just.

Gospel: Mt 4:1-11

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, Lord.

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread.” He said in reply, “It is written: One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.” Then

the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: He will command his angels concerning you and with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered him, “Again it is written, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.” Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, “All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me.” At this, Jesus said to him, “Get away, Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.” Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Commentary on Mt 4:1-11:

This gospel can be properly called the trials of Jesus, rather than the temptations of Jesus. These trials come after Jesus has just been introduced as the Son of God, and is about to begin his ministry, the new exodus that is going to be difficult and painful. Jesus is now put into trial by the Spirit who leads him to the desert to be tempted by the devil, the rival of God.

In this dramatic presentation of the trial of Jesus, Matthew presents a confrontation between the project of the Father and the project of the rival of God, the devil. The forty days in the desert recall Israel’s sojourn in the desert. The three temptations consist in this: (1) Jesus must do a miracle that is easy but unjustifiable, that addresses the desire for food: the economy in

social life. (2) Jesus must throw himself down so the angels will save him, challenging the power of heaven to assert itself over the power of nature and human rule: politics in social life. (3) Jesus will receive all the kingdoms of the world if he worships the rival of God, and breaks his obedience to the Father: religion in social life. In every resistance to the temptation, Jesus quotes the Scriptures which the devil also uses to tempt him. Fundamentally, Jesus is tempted whether he should be a Davidic messiah who rules with power, prestige and with swift and easy solutions to human problems, or, should he be the Suffering Servant of God who carries the sins of all, lives the face of God in complete solidarity with the suffering and struggles of the oppressed and marginalized in the human condition. His victory over these trials proclaims that total obedience to and communion with the will of the Father will lead us to total communion with others on our way to real liberation and salvation.

Join Fr. Ben Alforque, MSC of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in **GOSPEL BREAK**, a short yet entertaining and insightful discussion of this Sunday’s Gospel on YouTube.

Visit gospelbreak.wordpress.com. Or scan this QR code with your Smartphone or tablet.



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Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, in the midst of the interplay of Good and Evil, will help the victory of the Good by being in solidarity with the poor who resist the earthiness of personal egoism, social greed, despotism and tyranny.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
<p>The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, in the midst of the interplay of Good and Evil, will help the victory of the Good by being in solidarity with the poor who resist the earthiness of personal egoism, social greed, despotism and tyranny.</p>	<p>Cite actual experiences of migrant workers in foreign lands and the consequences of their absence among the families they left behind.</p> <p>Cite actual laws both in the sending and the host countries that are favorable/inimical to the rights and welfare of migrants and migrant labor and their families.</p>	<p>How can the Church guide the migrants and their sending and host countries in knowing the boundaries between the egoism and greed of the old self in Adam, and the love and generosity that suffers in the new Man that is Christ? How can she evangelize the structures of society?</p>

Profession of Faith

A: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and

earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

P: Dear sisters and brothers, let us now elevate our minds and hearts to God in prayer, for our own needs, for the needs of the Church and of the world. Let our response be: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may continue to proclaim that true salvation and liberation from our own sin of selfishness and social greed can only be found in the loving and forgiving Cross

of Jesus. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis I, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that they may continue to build structures of care and defense for migrants, migrant labor and their families based on the fundamental belief that everything belongs to God and he wants us all to share in his love and bountiful creation as one family. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they may pursue reforms in immigration laws, opening up the borders for people and labor based on the priority of human dignity, family welfare and rights over the commercial goods for the market. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: For all of us: that we will prepare well for the Holy Week and Easter through a change of mind and heart that seeks first the welfare of others, rather than our own, in imitation of Jesus, the Suffering Servant of God and Savior of his people. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. (*pause*)... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love you in obedience and suffering.

P: Lord, we ask You to grant us these petitions and transform us in these days of prayer, fasting, abstinence and penance. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: 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: Give us the right disposition, O Lord, we pray, to make these offerings, for with them we celebrate the beginning of this venerable and sacred time. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: 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.

By abstaining forty long days from earthly food, he consecrated through his fast the

pattern of our Lenten observance and, by overturning all the snares of the ancient serpent, taught us to cast out the leaven of malice, so that, celebrating worthily the Paschal Mystery, we might pass over at last to the eternal paschal feast.

And so, with the company of Angels and Saints, we sing the hymn of your praise, as without end we acclaim:

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

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.

A: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray. Renewed now with heavenly bread, by which faith is nourished, hope increased, and charity strengthened, we pray, O Lord, that we may learn to hunger for Christ, the true and living Bread, and strive to live by every word which proceeds from your mouth. . Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Bow down your heads and pray for God's blessing: May bountiful blessings, O Lord, we pray, come down upon your people, that hope may grow in tribulation, virtue be strengthened in temptation, and eternal redemption be assured. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: And may the blessings of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

C: Thanks be to God.■