



**Fourth Sunday of Lent**  
**March 15, 2015**

## **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, reclaims the immeasurable richness in Christ by resisting the comfort that darkness provides.**

Inspired by the visit of Pope Francis and with today's theme: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, reclaims the immeasurable richness in Christ by resisting the comfort that darkness provides, we continue to ponder on PCP-II's vision of a Church Renewed with focus on Discipleship in Community. In the context of the Church as a community-in-mission, it now talks of "our missionary vocation".

### **"C.4 A Priestly, Prophetic and Kingly People**

**(116)** That we may fulfill our mission wherever we are sent by the Lord, Christ has constituted us as a priestly people, prophetic and kingly. He has gifted us with a sharing of his own three-fold mission.

#### **A Priestly People**

**(117)** All the baptized share in the priestly dignity of Christ. Christ has made us into 'a kingdom, priests for his God and Father'.

As faithful, we must present ourselves as a sacrifice, living, holy and pleasing to God, praising God and bearing witness to Christ. We exercise our priesthood 'by the reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, abnegation and active charity. We exercise it when we participate in the offering of the Eucharist.

**(118)** This one priesthood is shared differently by the faithful. All the baptized share in the common priesthood. Some, ordained to shepherd and serve the people of God, possess the ministerial priesthood by virtue of the sacrament of Orders. Though these two ways of sharing the one priesthood of Christ differ in essence, each is ordered to each other. Through the service and leadership of the ministerial priests, the whole people of God grow in holiness and serve as leaven from within the world in order to bring about its sanctification and transformation. On the other hand, the Christian community participates in the celebration of the Eucharist, and collaborates with the priests for the life and mission of the Church."

In your view, what is the link between the Eucharist and the life and mission of the Church? What is the relationship between holiness and being a leaven from within the world and the world's sanctification and transformation? What kind of transformation do you want? ■

## Introductory Rites

**Entrance Antiphon:**(Is 66:10-11)

*Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.*

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

*C: Amen*

P: The Lord be with you.

*C: And with your spirit.*

## Introduction and Welcome

P: Dear brothers and sisters: today is the Fourth Sunday of Lent. We continue to enter now into the sacred time dedicated to change of heart, to leaving the old sinful ways, to repentance and reconciliation through unconditional love and the concrete terms of justice. It is a time dedicated to deep study of the human condition, to silent prayer and discernment, seeking God's will through prayer and fasting. Let us pray in a special way that through the service and leadership of the ministerial priests, the whole people of God grow in holiness, serve as leaven from within the world in order to bring about its sanctification and transformation and collaborate with the priests for the life and mission of the Church.

## Penitential Act

P: Brothers and sisters: to celebrate worthily these sacred mysteries, let us now recall to mind our sins and ask God's loving forgiveness and compassion.

P: Lord Jesus, forgive us when we lived as an "island of the privileged and the redeemed". Lord, have mercy.

*C: Lord, have mercy.*

P: Christ Jesus, forgive us when we lived as if everything depended solely on our never-ending works. Christ,

have mercy.

*C: Christ, have mercy.*

P: Lord Jesus, forgive us when we lived in the comfort of the light of darkness rather than in the overwhelming light of God's redeeming love. Lord, have mercy.

*C: Lord, have mercy.*

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

## Collect

P: Let us pray: O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. 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: 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23**

L: A reading from the Second Book of the Chronicles

In those days, all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

Early and often did the LORD, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy. Their enemies burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects. Those who escaped

the sword were carried captive to Babylon, where they became servants of the king of the Chaldeans and his sons until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. All this was to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah: “Until the land has retrieved its lost sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest while seventy years are fulfilled.”

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD inspired King Cyrus of Persia to issue this proclamation throughout his kingdom, both by word of mouth and in writing: “Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of heaven, has given to me, and he has also charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people, let him go up, and may his God be with him!”

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

**Commentary on 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23:**

This is the last chapter of the Chronicles. The chronicler summarizes the events from the death of king Josiah to the Babylonian exile. A summary description of the sins of the kings is made. The chronicler wants to convey that the accumulated evil of the rulers brought the nation a tragic destruction. V. 21 is a combination of Jer 25:11 and Lev 26:33-35: the exile is a fulfillment of the Sabbath. The edict of Cyrus (vv. 22-23) points to the future return of the exiles to their homeland.

**Responsorial Psalm: Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6**

***R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!***

By the streams of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. On the aspens of that land we hung up our harps.

***R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!***

For there our captors asked of us the lyrics of our songs, And our despoilers urged us to be joyous: “Sing for us the songs of Zion!”

***R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!***

How could we sing a song of the LORD in a foreign land? If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten!

***R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!***

May my tongue cleave to my palate if I remember you not, If I place not Jerusalem ahead of my joy.

***R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!***

**Commentary on Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6:**

This is a psalm of lament. The psalm can be divided into three (3) parts, namely: (1) the streams of Babylon (2) a memory of Jerusalem; and (3) a self-curse. The poem is a song of resistance, full of sadness and nostalgia.

**Second Reading: Eph 2:4-10**

L: The second reading from the Letter to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters: God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ — by grace you have been saved —, raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show

the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

#### **Commentary on Eph 2:4-10**

Paul talks here of “before” and “after”: “before” we were slaves to sin, a common solidarity with evil which makes us all equal, with Jews and pagans alike; but “after” God has offered us the free gift that makes all people one, a common solidarity in salvation. Paul is proposing this militant identity of the Christians in Ephesus in the face of the corrupt influence of the decadent Roman Empire and this alternative faith to the Jewish Law. In the end, he affirms our being a new creation in Christ, with the missionary task that is the consequence of the gift of salvation. The Church is not a “ghetto” or an island of the privileged and the redeemed; rather, the Church is a community called to proclaim to the world in the ages to come “the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus”.

#### **Verse before the Gospel: (John 3:16)**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

#### **Gospel: John 3:14-21**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Jesus said to Nicodemus: “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise be to you, O Lord Jesus Christ.*

#### **Commentary on John 3:14-21**

This gospel text belongs to the story concerning the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus. John introduces Nicodemus as a Pharisee and a leading figure of the Jews. In an ironic twist, Nicodemus is transformed into a student, while Jesus, whom he calls Rabbi, becomes his teacher. In this conversation, Nicodemus is slowly led by Jesus to know more intimately the Kingdom of God. This text then focuses on the reason behind humanity’s possible entry into eternal life: God’s overwhelming love for the world made him send his only Son to redeem the world. God’s action invites the response of faith.

God’s love for us and for the cosmos that he has created is so great that he sent his only Son for our sake. But how tragically painful it is to realize that this limitless

love of God has been rejected by many in favor of comfort and the deceptive light of darkness.

**Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, reclaims the immeasurable richness in Christ by resisting the comfort that darkness provides.**

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, reclaims the immeasurable richness in Christ by resisting the comfort that darkness provides.	In the experience of the poor in your community, what would you consider as the poor's darkest hour? Why? What would you consider as their brightest hour? Why? How did your BEC and parish respond to these "hours" of the poor?	"Through the service and leadership of the ministerial priests, the whole people of God grow in holiness and as leaven from within the world to bring about its sanctification and transformation."

**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 hearts and minds to God our Father, and, with joy, humbly present to him our prayers. For every prayer let our response be: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

L: Let us pray for the Church: that, being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in her continuing mission to reclaim the immeasurable richness in Christ by resisting the comfort of the light that darkness provides. Let us pray to the Lord.

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, 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, by sharing the sentiments of the heart of Christ, they may continue to humbly expose the false light of the economy of exclusion and the new idolatry of money and bring the people to the light of an economy that serves persons and communities. Let us pray to the Lord.

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they may continue to promote the common good by establishing structures of sharing and communion, by closing the gap between the rich and the poor and by an education that puts human beings at the center, and not money, investment or financial profits. Let us pray to the Lord.

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

L: For all of us, inhabitants of the earth and citizens of heaven: that we may inspire one another to envision and build a future human community as communion, by finding ways to help eradicate poverty and malnutrition, put an end to homelessness and joblessness, restore the integrity of the environment through community efforts, volunteerism and solidarity. Let us pray to the Lord.

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

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 see the light of your salvation.**

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

**R: Lord, help us see the light of your salvation.**

P: Lord God of love and compassion, listen to the prayers of your people. Help us to follow the way of your Son, who by being recognized as rabbi, the teacher, by Nicodemus, exposed the unhappy life lived in luxury and comfort and revealed instead the genuine joy found in God's limitless love for all creation, especially the poor. We ask this through the 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: We place before you with joy these offerings, which bring eternal remedy, O Lord, praying that we may both faithfully revere them and present them to you, as is fitting, for the salvation of all the world. 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.

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 we, 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:

*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.

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.**

*(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.*

**Communion Antiphon:** Ps 122 (121):3-4

***Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one together. It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to praise the name of the Lord.***

### **Prayer after Communion**

P: Let us pray: O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into the world, illuminate our hearts, we pray, with the splendor of your grace, that we may always ponder what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty and love you in all sincerity. Through Christ our Lord.

*C: Amen.*

### Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Bow down for the blessing: Look upon those who call to you, O Lord, and sustain the weak; give life by your unfailing light to those who walk in the shadow of death, and bring those rescued by your mercy from every evil to reach the highest good. 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 forth, the mass is ended.

C: *Thanks be to God.* ■

Please help us continue publishing this Missalette with your donation.

Any amount is appreciated no matter how small.

Thank you!

Account Name:

Communication Foundation for Asia  
Metrobank V-Mapa, Sta. Mesa, Manila  
Branch:

SA# 3306-509-480

BDO Old Sta. Mesa Road, Manila Branch:

SA# 7090-042-836

Please fax deposit slip to 713-2736

We are located at # 4427 Old Sta. Mesa St.,  
Sta. Mesa, Manila

**The Church  
of the Poor,  
through the  
Basic  
Ecclesial  
Communi-  
ties,  
reclaims the  
immeasura-  
ble richness  
in Christ by  
resisting the  
comfort that  
darkness  
provides.**

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](http://gospelbreak.wordpress.com). Or scan this QR code with your Smartphone or tablet.

