

Link to Liturgy



1st Sunday of Advent The End of the World

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“There will be signs in the sun”

Introit Entrance Antiphon – Roman Missal

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred.

Ad te levavi

Ps 25 (24): 1-3

VIII



U nto you have I lifted up my soul. *

O my God, I trust in you, let

me not be put to shame; do not allow my enemies to

laugh at me; for none of those who are awaiting you

will be dis-appoint-ed.

Alternate options:

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Days of Elijah

Cool or Holy (Remnant)

Collect – Roman Missal

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

Amen

All-powerful God,
increase our strength of will for doing good
that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming
and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven,
where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – Lk 21:25-28, 34-36 – Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
- Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus said to his disciples: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.”

“Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

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

**Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 1st Sunday of Advent
– Cycle C**

From a catechetical instruction by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem,
Bishop
On the twofold coming of Christ

We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a divine kingdom.

In general, whatever relates to our Lord Jesus Christ has two aspects. There is a birth from God before the ages, and a birth from a virgin at the fullness of time. There is a hidden coming, like that of rain on fleece, and a coming before all eyes, still in the future.

At the first coming he was wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. At his second coming he will be clothed in light as in a garment. In the first coming he endured the cross, despising the shame; in the second coming he will be in glory, escorted by an army of angels. We look then beyond the first coming and await the second. At the first coming we said: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. At the second we shall say it again; we shall go out with the angels to meet the Lord and cry out in adoration: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

The Savior will not come to be judged again, but to judge those by whom he was judged. At his own judgment he was silent; then he will address those who committed the outrages against him when they crucified him and will remind them: You did these things, and I was silent.

His first coming was to fulfill his plan of love, to teach men by gentle persuasion. This time, whether men like it or not, they will be subjects of his kingdom by necessity. Malachi, the prophet, speaks of the two comings. And the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple: that is one coming.

Again he says of another coming: Look, the Lord almighty will come, and who will endure the day of his entry, or who will stand in his sight? Because he comes like a refiner's fire, a fuller's herb, and he will sit refining and cleansing.

These two comings are also referred to by Paul in writing to Titus: The grace of God the Savior has appeared to all men, instructing us to put aside impiety and worldly desires and live temperately, uprightly, and religiously in this present age, waiting for the joyful hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Notice how he speaks of a first coming for which he gives thanks, and a second, the one we still await.

That is why the faith we profess has been handed on to you in these words: He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

Our Lord Jesus Christ will therefore come from heaven. He will come at the end of the world, in glory, at the last day. For there will be an end to this world, and the created world will be made new.

to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen

“The End” Notes

- [1] 1 Peter 5:8-11
- [2] 1 Thessalonians 5:6-9
- [3] Psalm 91:5
- [4] Romans 1:25
- [5] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 671
- [6] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1431
- [7] Galatians 2:19-20
- [8] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1450
- [9] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 368
- [10] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 2612
- [11] 1 Thessalonians 5:17-22
- [12] Daniel Quinn; *The Story of B*
- [13] John Paul II; *Reconciliation and Penance*, 18
- [14] 2002 Pennsylvania Catholic Conference
- [15] ibid
- [16] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 221
- [17] ibid
- [18] Revelation 21:27
- [19] 1 John 4:16-21
- [20] [Link to Liturgy Lesson - Reconciliation](#)
- [21] 2002 Pennsylvania Catholic Conference
- [22] Romans 5:20-21
- [23] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1264
- [24] Fr. Leonard Goffine; *The Church's Year Part I*; page 99
- [25] ibid
- [26] This lesson has been copied in its entirety from: <http://www.monkrock.com/index.cfm?load=page&page=852>

Marian Antiphon – Alma Redemptoris Mater– Simple Tone**Anthems to the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

Simple Tone.

5.
A Lma * Redemptó-ris Máter, quae pérví-a caéli
 pórtá mánes, Et stélla má-ris, succúrre cadénti súrge-
 re qui cúrat pópu-lo : Tu quae genu-ísti, natúra mi-rán-
 te, tú-um sánctum Geni-tó-rem : Virgo pri-us ac posté-
 ri-us, Gabri-é-lis ab óre súmens illud Ave, peccató-
 rum mi-se-ré-re.

Alma Redemptoris Mater (English Translation) Loving mother of the Redeemer, open door to heaven and star of the sea, come quickly to the aid of thy people, fallen indeed but striving to stand again. To nature's astonishment thou wert the mother of thy holy Creator without ceasing to be a virgin, and heard from Gabriel that greeting: "Hail." Have pity on us sinners. V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit. Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made know by the message of an angel may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought

Responsory – Office of Readings

Watching from afar, I see the power of God advancing, and the whole earth enveloped in a cloud. Go out to meet him crying:
 – Tell us if you are the One who is to reign over the people of Israel.

All peoples of the earth, all children of men,
 – rich and poor alike, go out to meet him crying:

Shepherd of Israel, hear us, you who lead Joseph's race like a flock,
 – tell us if you are the One.

Throw wide the gates, you princes, let the King of glory enter,
 – who is to reign over the people of Israel.

Watching from afar, I see the power of God advancing, and the whole earth enveloped in a cloud. Go out to meet him crying:
 – Tell us if you are the One who is to reign over the people of Israel.

Be Sober and Vigilant – Lesson and Discussion

"Be vigilant at all times"

In the Gospel today Jesus says:

"Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."

Our first Pope, Saint Peter says:

"Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers through the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little. To him be dominion forever. Amen." [1]

Saint Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles and a pillar of the Church with Saint Peter says:

"Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober. Those who sleep go to sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the

helmet that is hope for salvation. For God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”[2]

What are the similarities between the words of Our Lord and the words of Saints Peter and Paul?

1. Tribulations or sufferings are imminent to the Christian life. Christians will suffer and we must know that our fellow believers “undergo the same sufferings”.
2. We must be steadfast in faith and allow Jesus to restore, confirm and strengthen us. We must pray that we have the strength. We gain this grace and strength to be steadfast and firm in the faith through the Sacrament of Confirmation.
3. We must be vigilant. We cannot let our guard down. In the antiphon we pray, “let me be put to shame, do not allow my enemies to laugh at me.” We have an enemy who wants to devour our soul.
4. Our destiny is not this earth. “The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus” We are called to share in the eternal glory of Jesus Christ. We pray in the antiphon, “for none of those who are awaiting you will be disappointed.” We are waiting, but vigilant and steadfast in faith and full of hope that the home we await will not be disappointing.

MUSIC – “Where I Belong” by Switchfoot – POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 6:54

<http://youtu.be/vJOm1nJ7wqY>

This song is a reflection on where we truly belong which is Heaven. This can fit with any of the four points, but works best with the fourth to describe our destiny is to be somewhere I can truly call home.

How will we endure suffering, remain steadfast, be vigilant, and keep our destiny of heaven in mind? Saint Paul says that we must live the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. We should be “...putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation.”

Look at the prayers below for each of the Theological Virtues. How do these virtues help us endure suffering, remain steadfast, be vigilant and keep our eyes on heaven?

The Church recommends doing an examination of conscience each night as well as praying an Act of Contrition. Below are two popular versions of the Act of Contrition.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

tives, even the most secret, known only to God, will then be as plainly revealed to the whole world as if they were written on each one's forehead; by these each one will be judged, and be eternally rewarded, or eternally punished.

O God! If we must then give an account of every idle word (Mt. 12:36), how can we stand in the face of so many sinful words and actions!

Why will God hold a universal public Judgment? Although immediately after death, a special private judgment of each soul takes place, God has ordained a public and universal judgment for the following reasons:

First, that it may be clearly shown to all how just has been His private judgment, and also that the body which has been the instrument of sin or of virtue may share in the soul's punishment or reward;

Secondly, that the justice which they could by no means obtain in this life, may be rendered before the whole world to the oppressed poor, and to persecuted innocence, and that the wicked who have abused the righteous, and yet have been considered honest and good, may be put to shame before all;

Thirdly, that the graces and means of salvation bestowed upon each, may be made known;

Fourthly, that the blessed providence of God which often permitted the righteous to suffer evil while the wicked prospered, may be vindicated, and it be shown on that day that His acts are acts of the greatest wisdom;

Fifthly, that the wicked may learn the goodness of God, not for their comfort or benefit, but for their greater sorrow, that they may see how He rewards even the slightest work performed for His love and honor; finally, that Christ may be exalted before the wicked on earth as before the good in heaven, and that the truth of His words may solemnly be made manifest.

See also the following Link to Liturgy lessons:

Lesson - End of Times

Lesson - The falseness of the rapture theory

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Act of Contrition

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom, who can neither, deceive nor be deceived. In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

Our faith helps us to remain steadfast, for we can know and trust that the teachings of Christ and His Church are true and although they are attacked by Satan and the world, this does not make them false, for they remain true because God Himself has revealed them and as Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote, "Truth itself speaks truly or there's nothing true." Faith then is an amour, a breast plate, protecting our heart and soul from the deceptive arrows of Satan. With this breast plate we may say with the Palmist, "You shall not fear the terror of the night nor the arrow that flies by day." [3] We are so easy to believe anything and we are also prone to doubt. Our hearts therefore must hold strong to the teachings of Christ and His Church and have the breast plate of faith to block out doubt.

Act of Charity

O Lord God, I love you above all things and I love my neighbor for your sake because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good, worthy of all my love. In this love I intend to live and die. Amen.

How quick are we to fall in love with anything? We throw our hearts at so many loves. Similar to the Romans that Saint Paul writes to, we are quick to worship and love the "creature rather than the creator." [4] The breastplate of charity helps us guard our heart, giving it to God alone and to our neighbor for the sake of God. It helps us to remember that God is the highest, infinite and perfect good and thus nothing can be loved more than God.

MUSIC – "Hot and Cold" by Katy Perry – POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 3:35

<http://youtu.be/KYh-otnSMNE>

The song talks about the bipolarity of our personalities at times. How we love a person one minute and then hate them the next.

Act of Hope

O Lord God, I hope by your grace for the pardon of all of my sins and after life here, to gain eternal happiness because you have promised it, who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I intent to live and die. Amen

Hope is a helmet protecting our mind or rather keeping our mind on the prize: heaven. There are many things we can think of that give us happiness. There are many things that people suggest will make us happy. Hope enables us to think of what will truly make us happy.

How can we gain eternal happiness? How can we know that this actually is attainable? One way we can know that eternal happiness is possible is because temporal happiness is not. The things of this temporal world give us no lasting happiness, leaving us empty, and still wanting. There is temporal happiness, but it is temporary and fleeting. There is eternal happiness and it is eternal and everlasting. We are not allowed as Christians to give up eternal happiness in exchange for temporal happiness. We know that eternal happiness is possible because God has promised it. God cannot lie, so we know that this promise is true. **Why can God give this to us?** He is infinitely powerful. He is faithful. He is kind. He is merciful, and He pardons our sins.

If Jesus has already won the battle against our enemy Satan, why do we still have to fight? “Though already present in his Church, Christ’s reign is nevertheless yet to be fulfilled ‘with power and great glory’ by the king’s return to earth. This reign is still under attack by the evil powers, even though they have been defeated definitively by Christ’s Passover. Until everything is subject to him, ‘until there be realized new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church, in her sacraments and institutions, which belong to this present age, carries the mark of this world which will pass, and she herself takes her place among the creatures which groan and travail yet and await the revelation of the sons of God.’ That is why Christians pray, above all in the Eucharist, to hasten Christ’s return by saying to him: *Marana tha!* ‘Our Lord, come!’”[5]

Conversion: Heart and Soul – Lesson and Discussion

“Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy”

We are called to conversion. Conversion is not only needed but imminent if we are to share in the eternal glory of Jesus Christ.

scorned it, the consolation of the just who have loved it (Mt. 24:30).

Why will all this come to pass? Because as the people love the creatures of God so inordinately, more than the Creator, and use them only to His dishonor, He will destroy them in this terrible manner, arming all creatures for vengeance against His enemies (Wis. 5:8-24), and showing by the manner of their destruction the evils which will fall upon all sinners.

The **darkness of the sun** will indicate the darkness of hell; The **blood-red moon**, the anger and wrath of God; The **disappearance and falling of the stars**, will represent the fall of sinners into the abyss of hell and their disappearance from earth; And the **madness of the elements**, will exhibit the rage of the beasts of hell.

Sinners will then vainly, and too late, repent that they have attached their hearts to things which will end so horribly, and this will only increase their torments.

Why does Christ nevertheless command: "Lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand"? These words are spoken to the just who as long as they live on earth are like prisoners and exiles, but who at the Last Judgment will be taken body and soul into their long desired fatherland, the kingdom of heaven: into the freedom of the children of God. These will have reason to raise their heads, now bowed in mourning, and to rejoice.

How will the Last Judgment commence? By the command of God, the angels will sound the trumpets, summoning all men from the four parts of the earth to come to judgment (I Thess. 4:15). Then the bodies of the dead will unite with their souls, and be brought to the valley of Josaphat, and there placed, the just on the right, the wicked on the left (Mt. 25:33). Then the devils as well as the angels will appear; Christ Himself will be seen coming in a cloud, in such power and majesty that the sinners will be filled with terror. They will not dare to look at Him, and will cry to the mountains to fall upon them, and to the hills to cover them (Lk. 23:30).

How will the judgment be held? The book of conscience, upon which all men are to be judged, and which closed with this life, will be opened. All good and evil thoughts, words, deeds and mo-

own sin through a participation in the saving mission of Christ. We are temporal people and thus, through the grace of God, able to satisfy or do penance for sins committed. If children mess up a toy room, their mother is fully capable of cleaning the toy room for them, but she desires that the children clean their own play room, so that they can satisfy for the mess that they made. The mother may give them assistance and even help, but they are responsible for cleaning up their mess. They also may not be able to have any privileges until the room is clean.

If a person believes that Jesus takes care of both temporal and eternal punishment, there would be no need to believe in penance (satisfaction for temporal punishment), indulgences (the partial or full removal of temporal punishment, granted by the Church), or purgatory (the place where satisfaction for temporal punishment takes place if it is not satisfied on earth).

End of the World: The Signs – Lesson and Discussion[26]

“There will be signs in the sun”

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves.” Many people want to know the signs of the end times. Jesus tells us clearly in today’s Gospel what these signs will be.

Why does the Church cause the gospel of the Last Judgment to be read on this day?

It is read in order to move us to penance, and to induce us to prepare our souls for the coming of Christ, by placing the Last Judgment before our minds. Should not the thought of this terrible judgment, when all good and all evil will be revealed, and accordingly be rewarded or punished in the presence of the whole world—should not this thought strengthen us in virtue!

What signs will precede the Last Judgment? The sun will be obscured, the stars will lose their light and disappear in the firmament (Is. 13:10), lightning and flames will surround the earth, and wither up everything; the powers of heaven will be moved, the elements brought to confusion; the roaring of the sea with the howling of the winds and the beating of the storms will fill man with terror and dread. Such evil and distress will come upon the world, that man will wither away for fear, not knowing whither to turn. Then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, the holy cross, the terror of the sinners who have

Conversion, because it is change, is difficult and it includes pain and sadness.

“Interior repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return, a conversion to God with all our heart, an end of sin, a turning away from evil, with repugnance toward the evil actions we have committed. At the same time it entails the desire and resolution to change one’s life, with hope in God’s mercy and trust in the help of his grace. This conversion of heart is accompanied by a salutary pain and sadness which the Fathers called *animi cruciatus* (affliction of spirit) and *compunctio cordis* (repentance of heart). (1451, 368)”[6]

What is affliction of spirit? To understand this we can look at the Latin words *animi cruciatus*. *Animi* means “at the heart”. This is our very being, our soul, the core. *Cruciatus* means pain or torture. This is where we get the words “excruciating” and “crucifixion.” Athletes go through a type of pain or torture in order to perfect their bodies of the event for which they train. In like manner, the Christian goes through pain or torture in order to perfect their heart and soul. Our Lord, although He did not need either conversion or perfection, went through the pain and torture of crucifixion. Why did He do this? He underwent the pain and torture, not so that we would not have to, but rather so that we would be able to. For we only have the strength to endure the pain and torture necessary for our conversion because we are crucified with Christ. As the priest says in the Mass it is only, “with Him, through Him, and in Him” that conversion takes place. Jesus knew that we could not do this alone and so He was crucified so that we might as Saint Paul says be “crucified with Christ; yet I live, not longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.”[7]

Leadville Trail 100 [Mile] Run 2009 – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 6:21

<http://youtu.be/VsiocTDBZso>

One of the hardest races in the world is the Leadville 100 Mile race. Less than half of all participants even finish the race. Many people look at marathoners and other ultra athletes as crazy, but as mentioned above, it is to challenge and push through barriers of self. **What barriers do we put on ourselves spiritually? What sins do we need to purge and fight to kill off?**

What are the five things necessary for a good confession?

Examination of Conscience. Sorrow for Sin. Resolve to not sin again. Confession to a Priest. Penance.

Which of the five corresponds to affliction of spirit? Sorrow for sin, the resolve to not sin again, is the correspondent to affliction of spirit. What a beautiful gift to feel sorrow for sin. If we were to cut our self but were never to feel the pain, we might bleed to death. If we sin, separating our self from God and were never to feel the pain, we would remain separated from God, spiritual death. Physical pain and spiritual pain are necessary, because they indicate that there is a problem which needs healing. “Penance requires...the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confession with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction.”[8]

What is repentance of heart? Once again we can look at the Latin *compunctio cordis*. Cordis is our heart. *Compunctio* is to sting. Repentance of heart is a sting to the heart. Insects are very small and can go unnoticed until they sting us. Once they sting us, they seem to be all that we notice. The sting therefore brings about a recognition. The human heart and it’s inclination to sin, which we call concupiscence, can sometimes go unnoticed. Repentance is that sting, the prick or pain that enables us to not only recognizes our heart, but change our heart. Jesus says in the Gospel, “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy.” Our hearts will not become drowsy if we are repentant experiencing the “sting” of the heart.

What are some ways in which God “stings” our heart with His love?

We spoke of affliction of spirit being the crucifixion of the spirit. Repentance of heart is a sting or prick to the heart. Repentance of heart also is tied to the crucifixion of our Lord, for it was at the crucifixion that the Roman soldier not only pricked the heart of our Lord but drove a lance through His Sacred Heart. From this wound, blood (Eucharist) and water (Baptism) flowed forth. This blood and water are necessary for our repentance. If our Lord’s heart was pierced, how can we expect our own heart to not be pricked?

VIDEO – OFFERTORY 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:58

<http://youtu.be/Zqi27adOaZc>

Where does man’s inclination to do evil come from? “It is the sad consequence of original sin, that is, of that sin which our first parents, by their disobedience, committed in paradise, and which we as their descendants have inherited. This inclination to evil remains even in those who have been baptized, although original sin, with its guilt and eternal punishment, is taken away in baptism, but it is no sin so long as man does not voluntarily yield (Cat. Rom. Part.ii.2, 43)”[24]

Why, does the inclination to sin remain in us, even after the sin has been removed? “To humble us that we may know our frailty and misery, and have recourse to God, our best and most powerful Father, as did St. Paul, when he was much annoyed by the devil of the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7-8); that the glory of God and the power of Christ should be manifested in us, which except for our weakness could not be; that we might have occasion to fight and to conquer. A soldier cannot battle without opposition, nor win victory and the crown without a contest. Nor can we win the heavenly crown, if no occasion is given us, by temptation, for fight and for victory. ‘That which tries the combatant,’ says St. Bernard, ‘crowns the conqueror.’ Finally, the inclination remains, that we may learn to endure, in all meekness, the faults and infirmities of others and to watch ourselves, lest we fall into the same temptations.”[25]

What is the difference between original sin and actual sin?

There is both original sin and actual sin. Actual sin is personal sin that an individual person commits. When we go to Sacramental Confession we are absolved of our actual sin. Actual sin has both an eternal effect or punishment and a temporal effect or punishment. Absolution removes the eternal effect or punishment, which is hell. Penance removes the temporal effect or punishment from actual sin. This temporal punishment can only be satisfied in a temporal place, in which there are two: earth and purgatory. Penance is living a life of good works, sacrifice, and prayer. These actions, through the merits Christ gained on the Cross, remove the temporal punishment due to sin.

Jesus is both God and man, divine and human. He is the only man that can remove the eternal punishment due to sin, because He is the only human that is eternal.

If Jesus removes the eternal punishment due to sin, why does He not also remove the temporal punishment? God, in His wisdom, desires that humanity make satisfaction for their

through a penitential life of prayer, good works, and sacrifice.

There are many physical traits we inherited from our parents; some we probably like and some we do not like. Maybe we inherit a uni-brow or going bald; We may not want it to happen, but there is nothing we can do about it because we inherit them. In the same way we inherit the effects of Original Sin from our parents Adam and Eve. We are thus in need of a new inheritance, one of Grace and Truth which we are given to us by Jesus Christ, the New Adam and Our Blessed Mother, the New Eve. Why the old inheritance (sin) does not go away, the new inheritance (grace) is more abundant, and the new puts to death the old. Saint Paul speaks of this fact in the fifth chapter of Romans. It is summed up by his teaching, "...where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." [22]

This struggle between sin and grace the *Catechism* calls a wrestling. "Yet certain temporal consequences of sin remain in the baptized, such as suffering, illness, death, and such frailties inherent in life as weaknesses of character, and so on, as well as an inclination to sin that Tradition calls *concupiscence* or metaphorically, 'the tinder for sin' (*fomes peccati*); since concupiscence 'is left for us to wrestle with, it cannot harm those who do not consent but manfully resist it by the grace of Jesus Christ.' Indeed, 'an athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.'" [23]

What is tinder? Tinder is the material used to start a fire, concupiscence is the tinder which ignites the fire of sin. We must keep in mind that due to concupiscence we are flammable. When something is flammable, we keep it away from an open flame. In the Act of Contrition we pray that we will "avoid the near occasion of sin". The near occasion of sin or temptation is an open flame which threatens to ignite the tinder of concupiscence. There are many elements that keep a fire burning. First we must have the flame (near occasion of sin and temptation), then we must have the tinder (concupiscence), then the kindle. The kindle are the smaller sticks that keep the fire going once the fast burning tinder smolder out. Venial sins are like kindle. Finally the logs keep the fire burning for long periods of time. The logs are like moral sin. Although this fire is very real in our lives, Jesus gives us every means to quench the fire of sin.

The De Profundis (Out of the Depths) are the first words of Psalm 130. This Psalm is used in the Liturgy during the Introit (Entrance Antiphon) for the 10th and 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time and is an option for Funeral Masses. It is also used in the Offertory Antiphon for the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time and the Communion Antiphon for All Souls. Repentance must be "from the depths". "The spiritual tradition of the Church also emphasizes the heart, in the biblical sense of the depths of one's being, where the person decides for or against God." [9]

ACTIVITY – Scripture Search

Look up the following scripture verses:

Jer. 31:33; Deut 6:5; Deut. 29:3; Isa 29:13; Ezek 36:26; Matthew 6:21; Luke 8:15; Rom 5:5

What do each of these verses tell us about having a conversion of heart and deciding for or against God with our whole heart?

What must happen for conversion to take place? Our soul must be crucified and our heart must be stung.

Why is prayer necessary for conversion? "He [Jesus] calls his hearers to conversion and faith, but also to *watchfulness*. In prayer the disciple keeps watch, attentive to Him Who Is and Him Who Comes, in memory of his first coming in the lowliness of the flesh, and in the hope of his second coming in glory. In communion with their Master, the disciples' prayer is a battle; only by keeping watch in prayer can one avoid falling into temptation." [10]

Prayer increases in us a devotion to the Incarnate Word, fills us with hope of Our Lord's return, keeps us in communion with Jesus our master, and helps us always to keep watch, to stay on guard, thus avoiding falling into temptation. Prayer is the battle; this is why Padre Pio would call his Rosary a weapon.

What are the many weapons (various types of prayer) that we have in our larger battle of prayer? The greatest weapons are the liturgy. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Liturgical Rites of the Sacraments, and processions are at the top of our spiritual armory. We also have popular devotions such as the Rosary, novenas, chaplets, etc. *Lectio Divina* (Divine Reading) which is meditation on the scripture or spiritual reading also is a weapon in our battle of prayer as is every thought or action of our life if offered for the Greater Glory of God. We are always at battle and

thus must as Saint Paul says, “Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.”[11]

Sin: Poop in the Brownies – Lesson and Discussion

“to stand before the Son of Man”

In the Act of Contrition we pray, “O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.”

Why do we detest all our sins? There are three reasons given in the Act of Contrition. One, because God’s just punishments. Two, because they offend God. We must hate sin. Through sin we deprive our self and others of good, we fail to love God, and we offend God. If we do not hate sin, we will never stop sinning. The Catechism says we must have a “repugnance toward the evil actions.” Repugnance is a strong feeling of disgust. The thought depriving our self and others of good, not giving God our love, and offending God, who loves us, should disgust us. Sin is disgusting and this is why we should not only detest sin, but should also avoid the near occasion of sin.

Why do we tolerate sin? Many times sin is subtle, it creeps in unnoticed. The Gospel says, “Be vigilant at all times...” Sin is a deprivation of good. We must desire good and protect the good. Anytime we see good compromised we need to be vigilant and put a stop to it. Even if it is just a “little sin” it is still a deprivation of good and an offense against God.

Many times we use the term “slippery slope” to mean that if you let a “little sin” in, it could lead to greater sin. Another term that is used is “the camel’s nose” because if a camel gets his nose in the tent, he will eventually want or get his whole body in the tent. When we tolerate a “little sin” we are more likely to tolerate more sin in our life.

There are a few analogies that can help us to understand how sin creeps up on us and on society in general.

venial and moral sins is the example of bugs on a windshield. If we were to go on a long drive over several hours, eventually there would be many bugs that would be splattered on the windshield. Although these bugs are small, eventually the small bugs add up in number and obstruct the vision of the driver. Venial sins are like these small bugs that begin to obstruct the moral vision of the Christian. When need to get out of the car and wash the windshield, we need to go into the confessional and wash the soul. Using the same analogy, if we were driving the car and were to hit a large animal (mortal sin) we would have to stop immediately and fix the damage done to the car, just as when we commit mortal sin, we immediately go to confession.”[20]

What is Original Sin? “Original Sin is the sin committed by Adam and Eve, the first human beings. This sin was a willful act of disobedience, a rejection of God’s command that was so devastating that it ruptured the relationship which our first parents enjoyed with God. As a result of this sin, paradise was lost to them and to their descendants until our Redeemer, Jesus Christ came to conquer sin and death and restore us to our inheritance of the Kingdom of God. Original sin taints all human beings and is washed away through the sacred waters of baptism. However, while original sin is removed, its effects remain. One of these effects is concupiscence, that disordered desire within us which produces an inclination to sin.”[21]

In His mercy God washes away the guilt and eternal punishment due to humanity because of Original Sin. The effects of original sin however remain and therefore we need grace to help us overcome our inclination toward sin. There is a connection between Original Sin and Actual Sin. Original sin was committed by Adam and Eve. Actual sin is committed by each individual. Original sin has an eternal punishment, which is washed away by Baptism. Actual sin, if it is mortal, also has an eternal punishment, which is washed away by Baptism, if the individual is baptized after the sin is committed, or Sacramental Confession, if the sin is committed after baptism. In both Original Sin and Actual Sin, a sacrament removes or washes away the eternal punishment and guilt; the effects of the sin (the temporal punishment) remain. In the case of Original Sin, one of the effects, as mentioned above is concupiscence, our tendency or inclination to sin. In the case of Actual Sin, although absolution is given, and eternal punishment removed, damages have been done due to sin and thus there is a temporal punishment which is satisfied

is love – and it keeps us from sharing in the “eternal exchange of love” which is eternal life in union with the Blessed Trinity. If we commit a mortal sin, we must immediately say an Act of Contrition and go to Sacramental Confession as soon as we are able.

What is Venial Sin?, “according to the *Catechism*, ‘does not destroy the divine life in the soul, as does mortal sin, though it diminishes and wounds it’. Venial sin is ‘a failure to observe necessary moderation, in lesser matters of the moral law, or in grave matters acting without full knowledge or complete consent’. We must realize, however, that while venial sins do not have the grave effects of mortal sin, ‘deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin’. It should be the goal of every Christian to strive, through steadfast prayer, acts of penance and works of charity, for a life free of sin.”[17]

Love is still alive when we commit a venial sin, but love is offended and wounded. We cannot take this lightly. We want perfect love, not offended and wounded love. Heaven is the “eternal exchange of love”. This exchange is perfect love, not wounded love, for “nothing unclean will enter it [heaven].”[18] Our goal should not be to just stay away from mortal sin. In other words who cares if we rack up venial sins, as long as we don’t commit mortal sins? Saint John cares and so does Our Lord. Our goal should be love, for perfect love drives out fear. “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.”[19]

Do we need to go to Confession if we only have venial sins?

“We do not need, nor are we required, to go to confession if we only have venial sins on our soul. However, it is still prudent to go to the Sacrament if we feel our venial sins are habitual ones so that we may receive advice, counsel, and strength to stop committing even venial sins. Venial sins add up like drops of water in a bucket, the bucket needs to be emptied and is done so through Confession. Another way to think of the seriousness of

Frog boiling in water – “If you drop a frog in a pot of boiling water, it will of course frantically try to clamber out. But if you place it gently in a pot of tepid water and turn the heat on low, it will float there quite placidly. As the water gradually heats up, the frog will sink into a tranquil stupor, exactly like one of us in a hot bath, and before long, with a smile on its face, it will unresistingly allow itself to be boiled to death.”[12] **Give examples of how we as a society and individuals have unresistingly allowed sin in our society.**

It’s not as bad as... - Part of this “slippery slope” or “boiling water” mentality is that we dismiss sin, saying that it is not as bad as a graver sin. For example, movies and TV shows, which are sexual and immodest in nature are tolerated because “at least it’s not pornography”. Sexual activity is tolerated because “at least it’s not sexual intercourse”. Degrading speech and cuss words are tolerated because “at least it’s not the “F” word.” **What are more examples in our own life, where we have made these compromises?** There is a story of a mother who made homemade brownies for her children and her children’s friends who had come over to the house to play. Once the brownies were done and served the children loved the brownies and thanked the mother. The mother asked the children if they would like to know her secret ingredient. She then told the children that the secret ingredient was “poop” from the back yard. It was just a pinch of poop, very little, but yes it was in there. The children went crazy, trying to drink water to get the brownie taste out of their mouths. This should be our reaction toward sin, even a “little sin”. As the *Catechism* says we should have “repugnance toward the evil actions”. We should have disgust for a “little bit of sin” in our life as we would a “little bit of poop” in our brownies.

Rolling in the Dirt - There was once a missionary in a village that was asking for directions to get to a certain persons house for a party. Once he was told the directions to the house, the person giving him the directions asked how he would travel to the house. There were dirt roads in the village and the missionary explained that he would simply roll his body along the dirt road until he arrived at his destination. The villager explained to the missionary that this would not be a good idea because he would be dirty when he arrived and offend his host. The missionary used the opportunity to explain to the villager that just as it would not make sense to roll our body in the dirt as we travel to the host’s house, it likewise does not make sense to roll

our soul in the dirt of sin as we travel to heaven, where Our Lord Himself is our host.

If we were to roll in the dirt or play in the mud, we would not appear that dirty if we were around others who also rolled in the dirt or played in the mud. For example, if children were playing football in the mud, the mud would cover almost every part of their clothes. The players would look at their clothes compared to the others and say, "I'm not that muddy" or "we are both muddy, who cares, let's make more of a mess." Once the game is over and the children arrived at their individual homes, the mom might exclaim, "You are not coming in this house, like that, take you clothes off and go straight to the bath." In the atmosphere of the clean house, the child would realize how dirty he truly was. The same is true of our soul. If we are in sin, we like to hang out with others that are more sinful (more dirty) than us or at least as dirty, so that we don't look so bad. When we hang out with holy people or at holy places we begin to see how dirty we are and that implies that we need to clean up.

Saint John Vianny said in regard to sin, we have two responses. We either excuse our self or accuse our self. In the Gospel Jesus says, "...and pray that you have the strength...to stand before the Son of Man." Sacramental Confession is standing before the Son of Man, for we believe that the Priest in the confessional is *in persona Christi*, in the person of Christ. When we go to the Sacrament of Confession we are standing before the Son of Man, it is like a mini judgment, but at this judgment we accuse our self. After the initial greeting at Confession we can say, "Father, I accuse myself of the following..." How better can we pray to have the strength to stand before the Son of Man, than actually standing before the Son of Man in Sacramental Confession regularly? The Sacrament of Confession is the "mini-judgment" that best prepares us for our own particular judgment with Christ at the end of our life.

What is sin? – Lesson and Discussion

"to stand before the Son of Man"

What is sin? "Unfortunately, in society today, many people have lost the understanding of sin. Our Holy Father has stated that 'it happens not infrequently in history, for more or less lengthy periods of time and under the influence of many different factors, that the moral conscience of many people becomes seriously clouded. . . . Too many signs indicate that such an eclipse exists

in our time"[13]. In our day, many people have lost the sense of sin and feel that they can do whatever they wish without considering or fearing the consequences. For such people, the term 'sin' has no meaning. Yet we know that sin is a terrible evil which all of us must come to understand and with which all of us must struggle. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, sin 'is an offense against God as well as a fault against reason, truth and right conscience. Sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the eternal law of God'. In other words, sin is willfully rejecting good and choosing evil. In judging the degree of sin, it is customary to distinguish between mortal and venial sins. 'Mortal sin,' the *Catechism* teaches, 'destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it"[14]

What is Mortal Sin? "is defined by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as 'a grave infraction of the law of God that destroys the divine life in the soul of the sinner (sanctifying grace), constituting a turning away from God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must be present: grave matter, full knowledge of the evil of the act, and full consent of the will'. The *Catechism* emphasizes that 'to choose deliberately - that is both knowing it and willing it - something gravely contrary to the divine law and to the ultimate end of man is to commit a mortal sin. This destroys in us the charity without which eternal (happiness) is impossible. Unrepented, mortal sins brings eternal death' This 'eternal death' we call Hell, where those who have died unrepentant of mortal sin suffer the eternal separation from God and loss of eternal happiness, i.e., seeing God face-to-face."[15]

Mortal sin kills charity, preventing us from following the two commandments of love:

1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.
2. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

"But St. John goes even further when he affirms that "God is love": God's very being is love...God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange."[16] Mortal is also called serious or grave sin, for it not only prevents us from following the two commandments of love, but it separates us from God – God