

"In the beginning
was the Word,
and the Word was
with God, and the
Word was God."
~John 1:1

The Lord's Flock
Growth
DIGEST
PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES



"Lent – A Time for Humility and Repentance"

By : Sis techie Rodriguez
Elder, The Lord's Flock
March 5, 2014

Studying the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14) is very appropriate in beginning our observance of Lent: *"He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else, two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity – greedy, dishonest, adulterous --- or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.' But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*

The Pharisee was known to live a good and clean life. He was proud thinking he had already done everything for the Lord. He believed there was nothing wrong with him.

The tax collector humbled himself, confessed being a sinner, and asked for God's mercy.

Neither the Pharisee nor the tax collector deserved God's forgiveness. Salvation is only possible because of His love and mercy.

For anyone of us to say "There is nothing wrong with me" is the worst thing to say. It implies that we do not need God to correct us or to forgive us. Let us not be like the Pharisee in the Parable.

God forgave the tax collector who humbled himself and asked for forgiveness. Let us follow his example. Let us admit our sins and recognize our need for forgiveness from God. Let us ask for mercy from Jesus, the Lamb of God who died for us and redeemed us from our sins.

What is Lent?

Lent is a forty-day period of repentance that begins on Ash Wednesday. On this day and on Good Friday, we, as Catholics, are required to fast.

The word "fasting" comes from the Hebrew word "tsum" which means "to cover the mouth", and "to abstain". It is abstinence from food and drink.

In the Old Testament, there are many fasts held because of transgressions or to ward off present or impending calamities. Individuals and whole people join. Such fasts included activities written in Isaiah 58:1-12.

In the New Testament, there are frequent fasts for religious purposes. Jesus also fasted for forty days and forty night (Matthew 4:2).

Lent is a period of self-denial. It is denying ourselves not only from food and drink but also from something that gives us pleasure (smoking, movies, games, entertainment, etc.).

During Lent, we not only repent for our sins. We also remove our masks to enable the Lord to transform us. We open our hearts to restore our relationships with God and with our brothers and sisters. We adopt a Christ-like attitude and avoid sins of hypocrisy and duplicity. We also avoid lethargy and procrastination in our commitments to the Lord.

Lent is a perfect opportunity for us to ask our merciful God for the forgiveness of our sins. It is the perfect time to repent, to abandon our sinful habits, and to lead a new and transformed life in accordance with God's will.

Let us consider Lent as an excellent period to do good works and to give alms. When done with humility, these kind deeds serve as reparation or atonement for our sins.

Truly, Lent is a time for humility and repentance.

Report Prepared By : Sis Sweet Florentino
Scribe

Thanks to: Sis Lily Echiverri
Printing Sponsor