

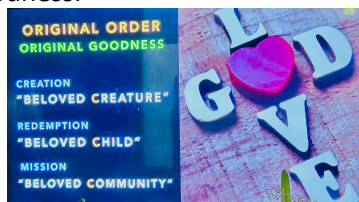
LENT: RECENTERING ON JESUS

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

By: Fr. Gerald Moscardon

March 23, 2024

Jesus chose silence when He was facing immense trials and tribulations that led to His crucifixion and death; He showcased unparalleled grace and forgiveness. Nowadays, we are often bombarded with scandals and bad news. These influence our decision-making as we become fixated on the negative aspects of life. However, by reflecting on the example set by Jesus, we can strive to cultivate a mindset that transcends the allure of negativity. Our focal point must be redirected to Jesus who epitomized love for humanity by steadfastly enduring negativity without retaliation. Lent gives us the chance to focus on the good news - to repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus taught us to turn away from our sins, and highlight our innate capacity for goodness.



1. People have a bias toward the negatives.

- 1.1. We remember traumatic experiences better than positive ones. We recall insults better than praises. We think about negative things more frequently than positive ones
- 1.2. The principle of loss aversion sheds light on how individuals are more motivated by the fear of losing something (punishment) than the prospect of gaining something of value.
- 1.3. People understand that the fundamental requirement for entry into heaven is to love God and neighbor. However, it is not heaven that motivates them but the fear of going to hell.

2. There is only one order, one source:

- 2.1. **Creation:** everything was created innately good and in order. Light was good in its function. Trees with seed bearing fruits were good in their quality. Woman was created for balance, complementary to man. Man was the only one created in the image and likeness of God.
- 2.2. **Sin:** The fall of man was caused by the attempt to gain God's wisdom. Sin caused the following:
 - 2.2.1. Pain & Sickness- "To the woman..." "I will intensify your toil in childbearing" (Gen. 3:16).

- 2.2.2. Hunger and Suffering - To the man He said "cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you shall eat its yield" (Gen. 3: 17-18).
- 2.2.3. Violence and Murder - "...Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him" (Gen.4:8).
- 2.2.4. Death and Grief - "For you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19).
- 2.2.5. Separation from God - "The Lord God, therefore banished him..." (Gen. 3:23).

3. Rediscovering our original goodness can be overwhelming. We cannot do it on our own. God sent His Son not to condemn but to save us.

- 3.1. Jesus came to fix the broken. He restored functionality.
- 3.2. Jesus fed the hungry. He restored quality.
- 3.3. Jesus freed the possessed. He restored balance.
- 3.4. Jesus fought death. He restored life.
- 3.5. Jesus forgave sinners. He restored harmony.
- 3.6. Jesus followed the Father's command. He restored friendship with God.

4. Our mission is to strive with the grace of Christ to recenter our lives.

- 4.1. Let us follow His way to find that goodness. With the sacrifice of one person, there is a new creation (2Cor. 5:17-18, Mt. 28:18-20).
- 4.2. We are given this time and opportunity to celebrate the Paschal Triduum. Stop what is sinful now. Turn around to face God. Move forward.
- 4.3. Three Pillars of Lent: Prayer –conversation with God; fasting & abstinence – sacrifice; almsgiving – serve and be responsible for one another.

Conclusion:

As Christians we are urged to contemplate our mortality and the inherent goodness. Jesus extends to us the offer of redemption and renewal. He guides us on the journey to restoring our original harmony with ourselves, with the community and communion with the Divine.

Reflection: How would you recenter your life? What would you do to strengthen your relationship with Jesus?

Transcribed by: Sis Zee Fuentes
Edited by: Sis Jo Advincula
<https://lordsflock.org/teachings/digests>
Tags: #Lent