

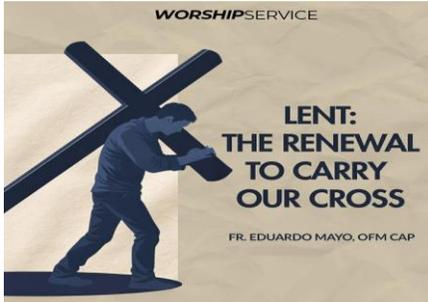
# LENT: THE RENEWAL TO CARRY OUR CROSS

A Lord's Flock Worship Topic

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Oftentimes we come to church seeking relief and consolation from our crosses outside of the church. Lent, however, invites us to embrace the cross, the origin of Christian faith and the power of God.



## 1. The Symbol of The Cross

- 1.1. St. Paul declared that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, whereas it is the power of God to those who are redeemed (1 Cor 1:18, 22-25).
- 1.2. The heart of the conviction of the first Christians was the resurrection of Christ, and the root of their tenacious attitude toward all forms of adversities. They were well aware of what they were getting themselves into: a faith that makes sense of suffering, provides strength in the face of suffering and demonstrates the positive in suffering.
- 1.3. It is for the same reason that we are so strong in our faith and brave in the face of life, because we are certain that Christ is risen from the dead and we know that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.
- 1.4. Christ is the wisdom of God for us; He is our holiness and redemption (1 Cor 1:28-30). Nothing truly good ever comes to us if not coming in the shape of Christ's cross. Thus, we are not afraid to enter our crosses because only through the cross shall we enter our own Easter.

## 2. Metanoia (Transformation of the Mind) and Metakardia (Transformation of the Heart)

- 2.1. St. Francis of Assisi related how the Lord's transformative power changed the way he saw

lepers from bitter to sweet. Before his death and with God's direction, he looked back at his experience of conversion and acknowledged that it was God who taught him to review the things in his life and see them through the light of God.

- 2.2. Conversion is God's initiative. To do penance is to enter conversion – to bring back God to His rightful place in our lives. Conversion likewise involves embracing the "negatives."
- 2.3. God leads us to confront and rethink those we abhor, to see them in the light of God's love.
  - 2.3.1. True love does not make us secure but makes us vulnerable. It is not about safety, but willingness to endure danger for the ones we love.
  - 2.3.2. Love is not about receiving blessings. It is the ability to sacrifice in order to bless the ones we love.
  - 2.3.3. Love is not about what we get, but about what we are willing to give.

## 3. Lent: An Invitation to Carry Our Cross

The cross is an invitation to discover our limitations and to overcome them. Thus, we are called to partake of the pillars of Lenten observance:

- 3.1. Prayer – to turn our focus on Christ
- 3.2. Fasting and Abstinence – to be break free from excessive pleasures of life
- 3.3. Almsgiving – to be a blessing to others

**Conclusion:** Life may indeed be challenging, yet it is worth living. Our sufferings purify us and make us more like Jesus, teaching us to love in the same way that He does. Lent invites us to embrace the cross and not to fear it; the cross is our righteousness and our sanctity.

**Reflection:** What cross in your life do you find too heavy to bear? What do you resolve to do during the Lenten season in order to embrace the cross of Christ?

### SCRIBES Ministry:

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<https://lordsflock.org/teachings/digests>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gK9KvI0g1G8>