



Lent: Preparing For

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PRAYER INTENTIONS, SIGN OF THE CROSS & OPENING PRAYER (Standing or kneeling*) *Glory to you, Lord. "Make my body healthy and agile, my mind sharp and clear, my heart joyful and contented, my soul faithful and loving."¹ Let my heart, therefore be holy, true to you O Lord my God, so that all may know I belong to You². Have mercy on us, and be with us today as we contemplate our Lenten Preparation.*

INTRODUCE TOPIC & SCRIPTURE **Joel 2:12-13** *"Yet even now," says the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and tear your hearts and not your garments." Return to the Lord, your God..."*

BREATH-WORK & GRATEFULNESS

BODILY PRAYER VERSE **"Jesus, I desire to walk with you in the desert. Holy Spirit, probe the depths of my heart."**

MEDITATION *"Repentance must transcend mere words and external gestures. Jesus' call to conversion and penance, like that of the prophets before him, does not aim at outward works, "sackcloth and ashes," fasting and mortification. Rather, it is aimed at the conversion of the heart, an interior conversion. There needs to be true contrition for sin and re-commitment to keep God's laws. Without this, such penances remain sterile and false. However, interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gesture and works of penance."³ / "Before the Blessed Sacrament, let us open ourselves before the Lord and allow him to extricate the muck and debris of our souls. Our Divine Master loves us and desires to cleanse us and infuse His divinity in us. To receive this grace fully, we must detach ourselves from worldly things, hence the call to mortification and abstinence. Let us examine ourselves: How well do we perform our daily duties in our state of life? Can we do our job better and with more cheerfulness? Through our contact with others, can we find an occasion to mortify our selfishness and help create a more pleasant atmosphere?"⁴ Let us make the words of Marty Haugen's musical composition our prayer as we discern God's will for us this Lenten season, "Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy; Come seek the tender faithfulness of God. Now the time of grace has come, the day of salvation; Come and learn now the way of our God."⁵*

RESOLUTION (Re-read Scripture.) *Is there a particular sin that I continue to struggle with? What virtue can I work on that will help me to root out this sin? Holy Spirit, come... Probe the depths of my heart. Reveal to me areas of weakness and in need of growth. I surrender myself to you, oh God. You have permission to do with me as you wish. My one desire is to draw close to you and be with you for eternity. Blessed Virgin Mary, you who faithfully and perfectly walked with your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, pray for us that we may persevere in working toward our conversion of heart so that we may grow in holiness this Lent.*

ENDING PRAYER (Kneeling*) *Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to be able to come together - to work on ourselves and strengthen ourselves, physically as well as spiritually. May all we do, glorify You. Our Lady of Perpetual Help: **pray for us**; St. Joseph: **pray for us**; All you holy saints in Heaven (or saint of the day): **pray for us**. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas

² Based on 1Kings 8:61 and 43

³ CCC 1430

⁴ Fernandez, Francis. 2017. Lent-Ash Wednesday. In *Conversation with God*, Vol. 2. p.34. Used with permission.

⁵ <http://cantusmundi.blogspot.com/2010/02/return-to-god-usa.html>

*Modifications include raised -knee position or sitting with legs extended. *Cross legged seated position is not to be used during prayer.*

