

MEDITATION: PRAY AND DON'T LOSE HEART

sitting in the dayroom
at juvenile hall
the book of life
is on the table
jaime takes the hand
of his mother
looks her in the eyes
and says
mom
i know i have caused
you a lot of pain
i am sorry
for everything
i have put you through

josefina starts
to well up
i have never stopped
praying for you son
i knew one day
god would grant me
my desire
that you change
your life
jaime stands up
and kisses his mother
then he takes the pen
and signs his name

in the book of life
his mother
then signs her name
next to his

mom
remember when i called you
on friday
and told you
i was in a gang
well now
i am telling you
that the gang life
has caused me
nothing but trouble
sorry
for what i have
put you through

josefina begins to cry
really cry
all the pain
not just from her son
being locked up
and the tears continued
to flow
she whispers
god has finally

heard my prayers
this day
god is here

what really causes you
to change
to stir things up
within?

jesus
for so long
i have been a warrior
of darkness fighting battles
that only hurt others
today
i choose to be a warrior
of light
to fight battles with your word
not with violence

jesus
as a warrior of light
i will spend my time
bringing your healing
to so many of us
who also have been
victims of violence.

CLOSING PRAYER

**Lord God,
Change is hard.
We know that your love
brings us true life.
May our lenten journey give
you glory and open us to
your love and protection.
Amen.**

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

INTRODUCTION

The season of Lent is a time for us to focus on where we are going in our life. What is important in our life? Are we choosing the path with God that leads to true life? Lent reminds us that with God all things are possible.

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

*My constant face off with temptations in prison makes it real easy to find excuses to give in and to give up. But I discipline myself with this motto:
"If I falter, I don't stay down but get up and learn from these experiences and keep going."*

I think each one of us is hurting in one way or another from our own experiences. Memories of past experiences and even new painful experiences make us feel like we are in a state of defeat.

Forgiveness helps me to become free and to live life on life's terms. It helps me to take responsibility instead of blaming others. Accepting God's forgiveness gives me real peace.

*Michael - Jesus the Risen Prisoner Community,
Corcoran*



OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray together:
**Lord,
protect us in our struggle
against evil.
As we begin this journey of
Lent, bring us the blessing of
your forgiveness and the gift
of your light.
Grant this through Christ our
Lord. Amen.**

REFLECTION:

Jesus, during Lent, I promise to....

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: JOEL 2: 12-18

Even now, says the LORD,
return to me with your whole heart,
with fasting, and weeping, and mourning;
Rend your hearts, not your garments,
and return to the LORD, your God.

For gracious and merciful is he,
slow to anger, rich in kindness,
and relenting in punishment.
Perhaps he will again relent
and leave behind him a blessing,
Offerings and libations
for the LORD, your God.

Blow the trumpet in
Zion!

proclaim a fast,
call an assembly;
Gather the people,
notify the
congregation;

Assemble the elders,
gather the children
and the infants at
the breast;

Let the bridegroom
quit his room
and the bride her chamber.

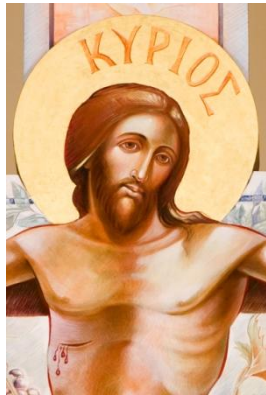
Between the porch and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD,
weep,

And say, "Spare, O LORD, your people,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
with the nations ruling over them!
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

Then the LORD was stirred to concern for his
land and took pity on his people.

The Word of the Lord

R. **Thanks be to God**



RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion
wipe out my offense.

Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

For I acknowledge my offense,
and my sin is before me always:
"Against you only have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight."

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

SECOND READING: 2 COR 5:20-6:2

Brothers and sisters:

We are ambassadors for Christ,
as if God were appealing through us.

We implore you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin,
so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Working together, then,
we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

For he says:

*In an acceptable time I heard you,
and on the day of salvation I helped you.*

Behold, now is a very acceptable time;
behold, now is the day of salvation.

The Word of the Lord

R. **Thanks be to God**



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GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-18

"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

The Gospel of the Lord

R. **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

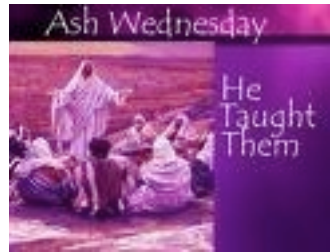
BLESSING OF ASHES

*The ashes used today come from the branches
blessed last year for Palm Sunday -- palms that
were waved in victory and praise.*

**Lord,
bless these ashes by which we show
that we are dust.**

**Pardon our sins and keep us faithful
to the journey of Lent.**

**Let this sign that we place
on our foreheads open our hearts
and heal our broken relationships.
Amen.**



DISPOSITION OF ASHES

**Remember God loves you and
follow God's love.**

*We leave the ashes on
our foreheads until they
wear off naturally.
They are a public
witness to those things
our society does not
wish to embrace: the reality of death,
penance for sin, and the hope of
resurrection in Our Lord, Jesus Christ.*

