

EL CORAZÓN DE LA CUARESMA

SEGUNDO DOMINGO DE CUARESMA — 25 DE FEBRERO, 2024

Este segundo domingo de Cuaresma nos invita a contemplar la transfiguración de Jesús en el monte, ante tres discípulos (cf. Mc 9,2-10). Poco antes, Jesús había anunciado que, en Jerusalén, sufriría mucho, sería rechazado y condenado a muerte. Podemos imaginar lo que debió ocurrir en el corazón de sus amigos, de sus amigos íntimos, sus discípulos: la imagen de un Mesías fuerte y triunfante entra en crisis, sus sueños se hacen añicos, y la angustia los asalta al pensar que el Maestro en el que habían creído sería ejecutado como el peor de los malhechores. Y precisamente en ese momento, con esa angustia del alma, Jesús llama a Pedro, Santiago y Juan y los lleva consigo a la montaña.

Dice el Evangelio: «Los llevó a un monte» (v. 2). En la Biblia el monte siempre tiene un significado especial: es el lugar elevado, donde el cielo y la tierra se tocan, donde Moisés y los profetas vivieron la extraordinaria experiencia del encuentro con Dios. Subir al monte es acercarse un poco a Dios. Jesús sube con los tres discípulos y se detienen en la cima del monte. Aquí, Él se transfigura ante ellos. Su rostro radiante y sus vestidos resplandecientes, que anticipan la imagen de Resucitado, ofrecen a estos hombres asustados la luz, la luz de la esperanza, la luz para atravesar las tinieblas: la muerte no será el fin de todo, porque se abrirá a la gloria de la Resurrección. Jesús, pues, anuncia su muerte, los lleva al monte y les muestra lo que sucederá después, la Resurrección.

Como exclamó el apóstol Pedro (cf. v. 5), es bueno estar con el Señor en el monte, vivir esta "anticipación" de luz en el corazón de la Cuaresma. Es una invitación para recordarnos, especialmente cuando atravesamos una prueba difícil —y muchos de vosotros sabéis lo que es pasar por una prueba difícil—, que el Señor ha resucitado y no permite que la oscuridad tenga la última palabra.

A veces pasamos por momentos de oscuridad en nuestra vida personal, familiar o social, y tememos que no haya salida. Nos sentimos asustados ante grandes enigmas como la enfermedad, el dolor inocente o el misterio de la muerte. En el mismo camino de la fe, a menudo tropezamos cuando nos encontramos con el escándalo de la cruz y las exigencias del Evangelio, que nos pide que gastemos nuestra vida en el servicio y la perdamos en el amor, en lugar de conservarla para nosotros y defenderla. Necesitamos, entonces, otra mirada, una luz que ilumine en profundidad el misterio de la vida y nos ayude a ir más allá de nuestros esquemas y más allá de los criterios de este mundo. También nosotros estamos llamados a subir al monte, a contemplar la belleza del Resucitado que enciende destellos de luz en cada fragmento de nuestra vida y nos ayuda a interpretar la historia a partir de la victoria pascual.

Pero tengamos cuidado: ese sentimiento de Pedro de que "es bueno estarnos aquí" no debe convertirse en pereza espiritual. No podemos quedarnos en el monte y disfrutar solos de la dicha de este encuentro. Jesús mismo nos devuelve al valle, entre nuestros hermanos y a nuestra vida cotidiana. Debemos guardarnos de la pereza espiritual: estamos bien, con nuestras oraciones y liturgias, y esto nos basta. ¡No! Subir al monte no es olvidar la realidad; rezar nunca es escapar de las dificultades de la vida; la luz de la fe no es para una bella emoción espiritual. No, este no es el mensaje de Jesús. Estamos llamados a vivir el encuentro con Cristo para que, iluminados por su luz, podamos llevarla y hacerla brillar en todas partes. Encender pequeñas luces en el corazón de las personas; ser pequeñas lámparas del Evangelio que lleven un poco de amor y esperanza: ésta es la misión del cristiano.

Recemos a María Santísima para que nos ayude a acoger con asombro la luz de Cristo, a guardarla y a compartirla.



GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Just two weeks ago, when Christians walked around all day with a cross of ashes on our foreheads, we may have received puzzled looks. Who bothers with fasting and almsgiving for 40 whole days? Many of us live with great abundance in this country; the only time we actually *need* to fast might be for lab work. With this in mind, it's helpful to remember the *why*: because Christ sacrificed himself for us, and he calls his followers to participate in his redemptive mission through our own sacrifices. Without sacrifice, we simply cannot be like Christ, nor will we see our own transfiguration in the resurrection to come. So Lent is a blessed season of reorienting our lives to Christian sacrifice: that of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Perhaps this season can also dispel some of the complacency that has a tendency to creep into our lives. The poor and hungry and disenfranchised still exist, and Christ depends on us to be his hands and feet to serve them. But how can we serve them if we do not embrace Christ's example as a living sacrifice? Ask the Lord for the grace to see and hear what he is asking us to do for him.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Today's readings show an incredible arc from Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son for God to Christ's Transfiguration after his Passion. Without Abraham's willingness to give up that which he wanted most and finally obtained, he would not have earned his greatest blessing from God in having countless descendants; and without Christ's sacrifice on the cross, all of mankind would not have been saved. Maybe we aren't called to great sacrifices such as these in our own lives, but we as Christians are called to offer our lives as a living sacrifice to our family, our neighbor, those in need, and God himself. Lent is a reminder not only to help us reorient our lives to God and his call for our lives, but to live it, too. By our own witness and prayer we have the ability to help bring others to the Lord and his promise of eternal life.

ACCOMPANY What is something you have always appreciated being done for you? What is a specific sacrifice, large or small, that you know has been made on your behalf? Make an effort this week to identify a specific need you know someone has, pray for that person/need, and offer to God a sacrifice of treasure, time or even your suffering for the fulfillment of that need.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER The World Day of Prayer is observed annually on the first Friday in March. It is an invitation for Christians to pause and pray together ecumenically and recalls our Christian responsibility to be sensitive to the signs of the times so that we might bring a more authentically Christian dimension to the concerns of our world, our country, and our community. Sponsored by the *Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada* and its national counterparts around the world, it is celebrated in approximately 165 countries.

2024 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICES – KITCHENER—FRIDAY, MARCH 1ST

The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada's (www.wicc.org) annual World Day of Prayer will be celebrated in Kitchener on Friday, March 1st, 2024.

The program material this year was prepared by the Palestinian Christian Women's Committee with the theme, "*Bear with one another in Love*". This service was prepared before the current conflict began. We can acknowledge the timing of the Holy Spirit in directing us to pray for this area of the world at this time.

There are three ways that you can participate:

You can attend the in-person service at St George's of Forest Hill Anglican Church

1. Friday, March 1st, 11 AM (or by livestream – <https://livestream.com/accounts/42588512>) assisted by several other churches of Kitchener.

2. You can go directly to www.wicc.org and view a 58 min video service at any time;

3. You can join the NATIONAL online WDP 2024 service on Saturday, March 9th at 1 pm EST. Breakout rooms before and after the service will give us a chance to "catch up", talk and share our thoughts. To join this service, and receive the Zoom link, please go to www.wicc.org to register.

All donations this year should be made directly to WICC at their website or mailed to:

Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada (47 Queen's Park Crescent East, Toronto, ON M5S 2C3).

ENGLISH SCHEDULE

<u>Saturday, February 24</u> +Stella Dombroski	5:00 PM Mass
<u>Sunday, February 25</u> <i>Second Sunday of Lent</i> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM Mass
<u>Tuesday, February 27</u>	11:00 AM <i>Liturgy of the Word</i>
<u>Wednesday, February 28</u>	11:00 AM <i>Liturgy of the Word</i>
<u>Thursday, February 29</u>	11:00 AM <i>Liturgy of the Word</i>
<u>Friday, March 1</u> +Stella Dombroski	11:00 AM <i>Liturgy of the Word</i>
<u>Saturday, March 2</u> +Diane Yantha	5:00 PM Mass
<u>Sunday, March 3</u> <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM Mass

HORARIOS EN ESPAÑOL

<u>Sabado 24 de Febrero</u> +Maria Suzette Garcia +Norma Heredia	Misa 7:00 PM
<u>Domingo 25 de Febrero</u> <i>II Domingo de Cuaresma</i> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	Misa 11:00 AM
<u>Martes 27 de Febrero</u>	12:00 PM <i>Liturgia de la Palabra</i>
<u>Miercoles 28 de Febrero</u>	12:00 PM <i>Liturgia de la Palabra</i>
<u>Jueves 29 de Febrero</u>	12:00 PM <i>Liturgia de la Palabra</i>
<u>Viernes 1 de marzo</u>	12:00 PM <i>Liturgia de la Palabra</i>
<u>Sabado 2 de marzo</u>	Misa 7:00 PM
<u>Domingo 3 de marzo</u> <i>III Domingo de Cuaresma</i> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	Misa 11:00 AM

SOUP SOCIAL: St. John's Catholic Women's League invites everyone to a Soup Social taking place **after the 5pm Mass** on Saturday, March 2nd and **after the 9am Mass** on Sunday, March 3rd in the parish hall. For a freewill offering, come and enjoy a bowl of delicious homemade soup. Take-out containers will also be available. Proceeds will go to Development and Peace. Thank you for your support.

JOHN B. MILLER & FRIENDS LENT CONCERT — Featuring Carrie Guse, Joe Orlando & Andrea Weber-Steckly, on **Friday March 1st at 7pm**. No tickets are needed. Donations may be made in cash at the concert (we suggest \$20 per person), or sent by Interac e-transfer to: john@johnbmiller.ca or by regular mail to: John Miller, 520 Country Clair Pl. Kitchener, N2A 4M7.