

ASH WEDNESDAY 2022 CONVERSION TOWARDS COMMUNION

REPORT

This year's **Ash Wednesday** 2nd March, 2022. Experienced something different from the usual years gone by which I attended, "**Conversion towards Communion**" at NBCLC, Wheelers Road, Bangalore. It comprised of - Prayer, Message, Adoration, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross and Holy Mass. It was a package of goodness all in one, to awaken the spirit of the beautiful season of the liturgical year - 'LENT'. It's a 40-day season. Lent is a time where we open the doors of our hearts a little wider, allow corrections and understand our Lord a little deeper. It begins with the Ash on the forehead; it is not a **feeling of shame**, but awareness that sin separates us from God.

The message was shared by Rev. Fr. Adrian. Lent is a time the church gives us to reflect on our lives. It's a time of formation or reformation. '**Conversion to Communion**' the first words of Jesus '**convert and repent**' an invitation to walk and talk with the Lord. Lent reminds the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Lent is also an opportunity to contemplate what our Lord really did for us on the Cross. Lent does not stop at sadness and despair it teaches us to live in the hope of the Resurrection and the day when every tear will be wiped out. We should pray to improve our communion with God and strengthen our spiritual practices in preparation for Easter Sunday. Observances during lent: Fasting; Praying; Alms giving.

We are a family and ought to check our ways and reform from time to time. Find a snag or imperfection within the family or yourself... Just be calm submit your brokenness to be that clay once again to be formed and molded. And God the Potter will handle it with care to form and reshape you into that perfect and beautiful pot and hold you dear to Himself. He will even help journey and control our life through Lent if we allow Him to, through prayer, mortifying the flesh, repentance of sins, simple living, and self-denial to achieve our spiritual goal.

'**We may be one just as the Father is one..**' the story of Adam and Eve is an example, though we are blessed with everything we fail to recognize it and wish to acquire something not meant for us, disobey God and fall into sin. These and many more types of temptations always surround us, become rebellious with God, breaking the communion and falling into sin.

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." - Matt 26:41

The two extremes that overtakes our life: The Garden of Eden where you experience **harmony** in the presence of God, to that of The Desert where you experience **hostile** situation in the dominance of Satan. Therefore Christians are taught to begin the 40-day period, to focus on our need for God's forgiveness, about repenting specially the areas of sin that recurs which are a constant hurdle to conform to God's will and enjoy receiving God's mercy and love.

The Three Temptations Jesus was faced by the devil: *Matt 4:1-11.*

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted.

First Temptation

Tempter - "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus - "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Second Temptation

Tempter - "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

Jesus - "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Third Temptation

The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Tempter - "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus - "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Parts of our Live Personal - the Body, Soul and Spirit

Fr Adrian expressed with the help of a few examples: Our bodies, souls, and spirits are created by God for His glory. They collectively define our existence. Despite the different parts and roles, however, they are connected and are influential to each other.

- The Body is of the Lower Nature.
- The Soul is of an Animal Nature and
- The Spirit is of the Higher Nature.

God is living in us. He never leaves us alone. Though Adam and Eve sinned against God He was with them. We can experience, feel and encounter the presence of God in our life. Thus we can reach the goal of life by serve others, make sacrifices and live the charism and live in a Higher Place with God.

Basics of it all are: An encounter with God; To know God and Neighbor; To serve God and Neighbor and; To come in Union with Body, Soul and Spirit. This can be achieved only by GRACE.

No **temptation** has overtaken you that are not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be **tempted** beyond your ability. In order to be victorious, we have to put our focus on the person of **Jesus Christ**. Do you see how **temptation** works? You can be easily consumed by, what you focus your heart on.

Meditation:

Why was I created?

I'm I going in the direction of communion with God.

What conversion the Lord expects in me during this Lent or forever.

At the end of the session, I felt that this Ash Wednesday 'Packed with Goodness...' can and should help one to realize that the battle of everyday life's challenges living with temptations of all sorts can be overcome by setting aside a brief moment at different parts of the day to - Praise, Welcome, Thank, Listen, Pray, Forgive, Observe Penance and contemplate on the Life, Death and Resurrection of our Lord. It needn't have to be just for the season of lent but for our lives journey on earth to always be in peace with our Creator and with one another.

by: Mary Elizabeth Juliana