



*Light and
Love in the
darkness*

CELEBRATING AT HOME THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Cleansing our hearts (John 2:13-25)

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when we cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.

CELEBRATING AT HOME THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

We stand in your presence, O God;
and we praise your holy name.

May your mercy be upon us, O Lord;
as we place our trust in you.

Show us your mercy and love;
and grant us your salvation.

Preparing to hear the Word

Like the money changers in the temple
many things clamour for our attention,
claim our love, absorb our passions,
draw us away from you, O Lord,
and divide us from each other.

Cleanse our hearts, O God.

Christ, you are the door by which we enter
the mystery of God's never-failing love.

You are the living temple of God's presence.

We have been marked with ash in the Sign of the
Cross, the sign of your healing and hope for us.
Make us your living temple.

Out of darkness, dust and ash,
raise us to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Holy Spirit come!
**Heal us with your love,
so that we may bear fruit once again.**

Opening Prayer

God of love, mercy and goodness
look graciously upon us who are weighed down by
our consciences. Lift us up through your mercy.
Heal us and restore us through our Lord Jesus
Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Gospel Reading – John 2:13-25

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"

His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection - *Cleansing our hearts*

The Gospels of the last two Sundays showed us that the Christian journey is from Temptation to Transfiguration. The Gospels of the next three Sundays of Lent present Jesus as the *road* (or The Way, as the early Christians referred to him) from temptation to transfiguration.

In the Old Testament scriptures the idea of the people of Israel being 'the people of God' is clearly established. By their behaviour they were to be a 'light to the nations', and the dwelling-place of God's presence. Only much later did the idea of God dwelling in a building called a temple develop. Even so, the Jews never lost the sense that they were to be God's own people.

The reading from Exodus commonly known as the Ten Commandments gives a pattern for God's people to live in right relationship with God and neighbour; to be the dwelling-place of God's presence.

In today's Gospel we find a deeply passionate Jesus causing a near-riot in the outer precincts of the Temple. In John's Gospel Jesus' prophetic actions have less to do with 'cleansing the Temple' than with saying that the Temple is no longer the way to be in right relationship with God.

According to John, Jesus is the new, living temple of God's presence and the meeting place between God and his people. Jesus is the way to be in right relationship with God and neighbour.

In our Catholic tradition we often refer to ourselves as 'temples of the Holy Spirit'. We recognise that we are sacred beings destined for union with God, people in whom the reign of God's goodness should be clearly seen in word, thought and action.

Lent is a time to decide what our life is about and what is important. Like Jesus in the Temple maybe we need to put an end to ways of thinking and behaving which clutter our lives, obscure God's presence and fail to bring life to others.

As members of the Body of Christ we, too, are to be the place where God is found on earth.

Prayers of Intercession

We are sanctuaries of your presence, O God.
Free us from everything unworthy,
that we may become a fitting house of prayer.
Lord, hear us as we pray:

Help us to face the shame and scandal of our own lives confident of your understanding and mercy.
Lord, hear our prayer.

In word and action Christ reveals your power and wisdom. May your Church and its leaders always bear witness to the depth and strength of your love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who have died recently especially those who have died from Coronavirus. Give them peaceful rest and comfort their families and friends. Give your healing to those who are sick and keep those caring for them strong in your love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Other prayers may be added

Loving God,
grant these our prayers as we rejoice
in your abiding presence through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Jesus himself taught us how to pray,
so with confidence we say:

**Our father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, God,
in your loving kindness remember your people.
Deliver us from the evil that threatens us.
May we be your light and love especially in this
moment of need.
This we ask through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the Lord bless us,
keep us from all evil
and lead us to life everlasting. **Amen.**