



Lent - Letting Go and Claiming Our Identity

This prayer can be adapted for individual or group use. If you are praying with a group, consider adding a gathering song from the selections below or another of your choice. You may wish to pray this prayer at the beginning of Lent or pray it each Sunday of Lent focusing on the corresponding reading for each Sunday. These Gospel readings are from Year C.

Music suggestions: Hosea, All Are Welcome, The Summons

Ambiance suggestions: Purple cloth/scarf, candle, simple cross

Preparation: *Before you begin... Allow your body, mind and spirit to release the tensions and worries of this day... Invite the Spirit to be with you in the silence.... Feel the Holy One's presence within and around you.*



Introduction/opening prayer:

All (Christians) are called to be hospitable, but it is more than serving a meal or filling a bed, opening our door – it is to open ourselves, our hearts, to the needs of others. Hospitality is not just shelter, but the quality of welcome behind it.



-Dorothy Day



Readings

The Sunday Gospel readings during the season of Lent remind us of our call to let go of whatever holds us back and claim our identity with and in Christ. Our Acts of 34th General Chapter remind us that it is both privilege and responsibility for us to share this love of a welcoming God:

Our mission and ministry is firmly grounded in our SNJM spiritual heritage. From our charism flows a spirituality that is the wellspring of our life, uniting us in our mission to proclaim by our

lives the primacy of the love of a welcoming God. We draw inspiration from the spirituality of welcome permeating the lives of Jesus, Mary and Marie-Rose. Daily we too strive to live a spirituality of welcome. We are at a kairos moment in our spirituality and identity. (p.12)

As we pray an excerpt of each Sunday Gospel of Lent, we ask ourselves: *how will letting go free us to open wide our doors to see the face of our welcoming God?*

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone.'" (Luke 4:3-4)

Pause

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and went up the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white...then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him!" (Luke 9: 28-29, 35)

Pause

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ...Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said



to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him. (John 4:5-10,28-30)

Pause

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth... he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see...Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him."

Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshipped him. (John 9:1,6-7, 35-38)

Pause

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, and said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” (John 11:17,20-21,24-27)



Time for reflection and sharing

Intercessory prayers:

Trusting in a God who welcomes us, we pray...

That we let go of our need to be in control and see the face of our welcoming God...

That we let go of our imperfections and see the face of our welcoming God...

That we let go of our differences and see the face of our welcoming God...

That we let go of what blinds us and see the face of our welcoming God...

That we let go of what binds us and see the face of our welcoming God...



Closing prayer:

Loving God, from long ago many sought your light to guide their way. As we journey through Lent, help us to be fully yours. May we let go of any assumptions about you that prevent us from welcoming others into our hearts. We make this prayer in the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. Amen.



Prayer service created by: Michelle Garlinski, SNJM

The Spiritual Ministries Network of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM) provides a variety of prayer services for personal and group spiritual nourishment. May your prayer life draw you closer to the Divine.

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