ST. GABRIEL CATHOLIC CHURCH LENTEN MISSION

“LET US CLimb TOGETHER”

With Fr. Richard Sutter

**Monday:** Lessons on Meekness and Mercy

**Tuesday:** Lessons on Purity and Poverty

**Wednesday:** Lessons on Zeal and Peace

**Thursday:** Lesson on Mourning and the Examining our Conscience

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**Recommended Reading**

*The Cross and the Beatitudes* by Fulton Sheen

Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton Sheen’s book will be our guide for this worship in Spirit and Truth: the 7 virtues linking the preaching of Jesus Christ on the Mount of the Beatitudes to the living of each beatitude on the Mount of Calvary as expressed by Jesus in his 7 last words on the Cross.

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**Prayer for Making a Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

*St. Alphonsus Liguori - 18th century*

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**THURSDAY REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

**MOURNING AND EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**

**MOURNING**

1. "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

   Archbishop Fulton Sheen asks, "Which comes first, laughter or tears? For we cannot laugh in both. Shall we place our joys in time or in eternity for we cannot have them in both? Should we mourn on earth or after we die? For we cannot mourn in both. We cannot have our reward both on heaven and on earth."
The world never regards mourning as a blessing but as a curse, and yet to mourn means we have loved. Even Jesus mourned. In John 11:35, "And Jesus wept" when He saw Mary weeping over Lazarus' death. Jesus promises eternal life to all who believe and that we will be reunited with our loved ones.

How do I comfort those who are mourning? Is there someone I can reach out to who is suffering and offer a prayer, phone call, or card to let them know I care? How can I be more patient with those who are doing their best to "get on with their life?"

2. We are an Easter people whether in Lent or out of Lent, yet we live all too often in a Good Friday world. When have I been lifted out of darkness by Christ's message of eternal life? How can I call upon this joy when I am in despair or anxious and grief-stricken?

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

St. Ignatius of Loyola considered the examination of conscience to be the single most important spiritual exercise. He offers that in this exercise, we review the ways God has been present to us through others and how we have responded to His presence.

An examination of conscience is a not just a list of our sins and faults but challenges us to find where we have had growth and where our victories have been. We give gratitude to God for His presence in our lives this very day. This is an opportunity to examine how our actions have reflected (or not) God's commandments.

The Examination of Conscience shared in Fr. Richard’s Mission message is on the following page. On this link from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, you'll find other examinations of conscience guides for children, young adults, single and married people.

Spend time prayerful examining your conscience now.
A Brief Examination of Conscience
Based on the Ten Commandments

I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange gods before me.
Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) and on Holy Days of Obligation (Jan. 1; the Ascension; Aug. 15; Nov. 1; Dec. 8; Dec. 25)? Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord's Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

Honor your father and your mother.
Do I show my parents due respect? Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible? Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have?

You shall not kill.
Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

You shall not commit adultery.
Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

You shall not steal.
Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse.
Have I honored my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.
Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

Christ's Two Commandments
How well do we love God and others? Do we love as Christ calls us to? In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ gives us Two Commandments: “He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments’” (Mt 22:37-40).

Not sure what love is? St. Paul describes it for us in his Letter to the Corinthians. Is this how you love God and others? “Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails” (1 Cor 13:4-8).