



Draw Close to God and He
Will Draw Close to You:
Be Converted

LENTEN REFLECTION FOR THE TASTE PROGRAM – MARCH 2ND, 2023

Opening Prayer

2

O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise. So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul shall be filled as with a banquet, my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you. On you I muse through the night for you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast. (Psalm 63)

Draw Close to God and He will Draw Close to You

3

- ▶ *Feb 23rd - Return to Me: turning to the Lord*
- ▶ *March 2nd - Be Converted: All about “conversion”.*
- ▶ *March 9th - Detest Your Sins: Seeing our sins for what they are.*
- ▶ *March 16th – Rejoice: A break from the heavy topic of sin. It’s time to rejoice.*
- ▶ *March 23rd – From Death to Life: This week follows “Detest your sins”. A deeper look at what death and life really are.*
- ▶ *March 30th – Embracing the Cross: That’s right we’re going to embrace our cross, not just carry it. I’m not trying to one-up Jesus, but when we see our cross for what it really is, we won’t want to ever put it down.*

A Brief Recap of *Return to Me*

- *A contrite heart, O God, you will not spurn (Psalm 51:19).*
- *Abide in Jesus: Remain in Him as He remains in you (Jn 15:4).*
- *Lent is overflowing with Grace. Respond to His Grace.*
 - *Actual Grace – God's initiative.*
 - *Sanctifying Grace – for our good.*
 - *Spiritual Gifts – for the good of others.*
- *Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.*

Be Converted

5

- ▶ What is it to be converted? (*Metanoia* and then some.)
- ▶ Illustrations of Conversion that illuminate and inspire!
- ▶ Conversion Transforms us and our love of God Grows.
- ▶ Our growing love of God renders our sins all the more detestable.

What is it to “**be converted**”?

6

Repent (*metanoia*) therefore and **be converted (*epistrephō*)** that your sins may be wiped away. (Acts 3:19)

CONVERSION: A **radical reorientation of the whole life** away from sin and evil, and toward God. This **change of heart** or conversion is a central element of Christ's preaching, of the Church's ministry of evangelization, and of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (CCC Glossary).

CONVERSION: The **profound transformation of mind, will, and heart** toward God (the HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism)

St. Peter

7



Gerard van Honthorst

Peter's Denial Foretold

Then Jesus said to them, "This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed'; but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee."

Peter said to him in reply, "Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be."

Jesus said to him, "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."

Peter said to him, "**Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you.**" And all the disciples spoke likewise.

Peter's Denial of Jesus

9

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But **he denied it** in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!"

As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazorean." **Again, he denied it with an oath,** "I do not know the man!"

A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away." At that **he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man."** And immediately a cock crowed.

Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." **He went out and began to weep bitterly.**

(Mat 26:69-75)

Simon, Son of John, Do you love Me?

10

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “**Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.**” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

He then said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, **do you love me?**” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, **do you love me?**” Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; **you know that I love you.**” [Jesus] said to him, “Feed my sheep.

Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”

He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he had said this, he said to him, “**Follow me.**”

Simon, Son of John, Do you love Me?

11

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love (AGAPE) me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love (PHILEŌ) you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

He then said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love (AGAPE) me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love (PHILEŌ) you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love (PHILEŌ) me?” Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, “Do you love (PHILEŌ) me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love (PHILEŌ) you.” [Jesus] said to him, “Feed my sheep.

Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”

He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he had said this, he said to him, “**Follow me.**”

Peter Before the Sanhedrin

(from Acts 4:13-21)

12

8 Then Peter, filled with the holy Spirit, answered them, “Leaders of the people and elders: 9 If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, 10 then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. 11 He is ‘the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.’ 12 There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.”

13 **Observing the boldness of Peter and John** and perceiving them to be uneducated, ordinary men, **they were amazed**, and they recognized them as the companions of Jesus.

18 So they [...] ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 Peter and John, however, said to them in reply, “Whether it is right in the sight of God for us to obey you rather than God, you be the judges. 20 It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard.”

Peter before the Sanhedrin (again)

(from Acts 5:17-42)

13

25 Then someone came in and reported to them, “The men whom you put in prison are in the temple area and are teaching the people.” 26 Then the captain and the court officers went and brought them in, but without force, because they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

27 When they had brought them in and made them stand before the Sanhedrin, the high priest questioned them, 28 “We gave you strict orders [did we not?] to stop teaching in that name. Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and want to bring this man’s blood upon us.”

29 But Peter and the apostles said in reply, **“We must obey God rather than men.”**

St. Martha



Henryk Siemiradzki

Our Introduction to St. Martha

(from Luke 10:38-42)

15

As they continued their journey, he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.”

The Lord said to her in reply, **“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing.** Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.

St. Martha Converted

(from John 11:1-28)

16

1 Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. [...] 3 So the sisters **sent word to him**, saying, “Master, the one you love is ill.”

4 When Jesus heard this he said, “This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So when he heard that he was ill, **he remained for two days** in the place where he was.

[...] Jesus said to them clearly, “Lazarus has died. 15 And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him.”

20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. 21 Martha said to Jesus, “**Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** 22 [But] even now **I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.**” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise.” 24 Martha said to him, “**I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day.**”

25 Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” 27 She said to him, “**Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.**”



Contrition for Our Sins

ONE LAST WORD ABOUT ST. PETER AND ST. MARTHA

Summary

18

A contrite heart (Godly sorrow) leads to
Repentance (*metanoia*) which leads to
Conversion (*epistrephō*) which leads to
A deeper love of Christ which leads to

Next week: Hatred of our sins.

Questions?